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# The British War Office ;: from the Crimean War to Cardwell, 1855-1868.

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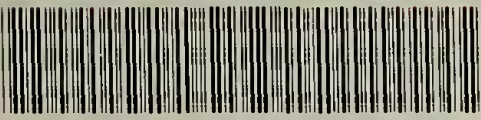
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THE BRITISH WAR OFFICE:  
FROM THE CRIMEAN WAR TO CARDWELL, 1855-1868

A Thesis Presented

by

Paul H. Harpin

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History

THE BRITISH WAR OFFICE:  
FROM THE CRIMEAN WAR TO CARDWELL, 1855-1868

A Thesis  
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## PREFACE

My purpose in writing this paper is to fill a gap. The literature of British Military History is filled with the exploits of various figures and armies, but comparatively little has been done in the field of Army administration at the executive or War Office level. Furthermore, with the exception of a few contemporary writers, the limited number of historians of Army administration tend to concentrate on Cardwell and the post-Cardwell era, emphasizing, not without justification, the abolition of purchase and the adoption of the General Staff concept. The formative years of War Office reform following the Crimean War are oftentimes barely mentioned at all. Hampden Gordon, the author of The War Office, the only work which deals with the whole of War Office history, spends only six pages (out of 331) on the period 1855-68, while he uses nearly 250 pages for the period 1904-19. This leaves a gap in the story of the War Office, and an important one, for during the years immediately following the Crimean War, the War Office underwent the most significant changes in its development. Most major historians of nineteenth-century Army administration, including Robert Biddulph, Brian Bond, W.S. Hamer, and even J.W. Fortescue have, in differing degrees, either directed their emphasis elsewhere or downplayed the importance of immediate post-Crimean War



changes, or both. An exception is Correlli Barnett, who in his Britain and Her Army 1509-1970 recognized the importance of these changes but did not examine them in any depth.

In my attempt to fill this gap, I have examined in depth the period 1855-68 with an emphasis on the reorganization of 1855. In looking at the changes made during this period, I have strived to determine what they actually did and what their impact was in terms of an improved efficiency, whether or not they solved the problems they were designed to solve and if the changes themselves created new problems.

For reasons of time and space I have limited myself to an examination of major departments or branches in the War Office itself, especially those involved in controversy and to the crucial manufacturing departments at Woolwich and elsewhere. My examination has concentrated on departmental functions and duties, the conduct of their business and problem areas. Moreover, I have devoted a considerable amount of attention to the area of the relationship between the Secretary of State for War and the Commander in Chief, which is so important to an understanding of this period.

Because of a lack of time, space and, most importantly, available research material, I have had to eliminate certain aspects of War Office operations from inclusion in this inquiry. Most important among these are the militia, military education (Brian Bond has done a masterful job in this area), administration of the Army in India and the internal workings

of the Commander in Chief's office. However, the exclusion of these aspects of War Office operations has in no way affected the course of my inquiry.



## C H A P T E R    I

### INTRODUCTION

As depicted by Hampden Gordon in his classic, The War Office, the British Army had been used in the seventeenth-century as an instrument of despotism and "an engine of tyranny" by Charles I and was consequently disbanded by Parliament at the Restoration because of Parliament's fear that the Army could once again be used against it.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, Parliament allowed Charles II to maintain four regiments of personal guards. These guards were soon reinforced in 1661 in order to maintain public order in the face of an armed uprising against the King led by a man named Venner. This reinforcement of the guards subsequently became permanent and a small standing army, which numbered 8452 men in 1663, came into existence.<sup>2</sup>

A series of acts including the Mutiny Act of 1689 and the Bill of Rights of 1689 established a new system (which continued into the twentieth century) in which no British Army could exist without the consent of Parliament, which also voted its funds. Parliamentary consent had to be renewed annually; therefore, even though the government, command and

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<sup>1</sup>Hampden Gordon, The War Office (London: Putnam, 1935), p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Correlli Barnett, Britain and Her Army, 1509-1970 (London: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1970), pp. 113-15.

discipline of the Army fell within the royal prerogative, the annual renewal of Parliament's consent was necessary for the Army's maintenance.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, for the next two hundred years or so, the methods by which the prerogative was exercised were changed, although the prerogative itself was not necessarily altered. Parliament gradually encroached upon the royal authority and, in many cases, the exercise of authority went from representatives of the Crown not responsible to Parliament to ministers who were responsible to Parliament.<sup>4</sup>

Although the history of this process begins in the late eighteenth-century, it is necessary to go back to 1661 in order to gain a full appreciation of it. In that year, a royal appointee, the Secretary at War, became the private secretary to the Commander in Chief of the Army. In 1670, the Secretary at War became an official clerk to the King and became responsible for preparing and countersigning royal orders relating to certain administrative needs of the forces. As the King himself became the Commander in Chief that same year, the Secretary at War's post increased in scope and importance especially as there was no Secretary of State specifically charged with military affairs. As advisor to the Crown, the Secretary at War controlled all matters bearing on Army finance,

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<sup>3</sup>Gordon, The War Office, pp. 26-27. The royal prerogative included certain powers in relation to the Army which belonged to the traditional rights of the Sovereign. (Gordon, The War Office, p. 20).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

the relations of the Army to the civil community and the general government of the Army. He spoke on military affairs in the House of Commons but was not responsible to Parliament. Eventually though, his power and influence came to be controlled to a certain extent by Parliamentary action. As military expenditures increased in the eighteenth-century, Parliament's desire to control it grew accordingly. The Act of Economical Reform (1782-83) consequently made the Secretary at War responsible to Parliament and charged him with controlling the expenditure of the Army instead of merely announcing what amounts were required, as before.<sup>5</sup>

The Secretary at War's independent authority was further eroded by the fact that, as the war with France led to a revival of the post of Commander in Chief in 1793, the communication of the royal pleasure was no longer the function of the Secretary at War. The King gave up the personal command of the Army which he had held since 1670 and the royal pleasure in matters relating to the internal discipline and regulation of the Army, including promotions, was henceforth communicated by the Commander in Chief.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, the introduction of a Secretary of State for War in 1794 further complicated matters for the Secretary at War and indicated increased Parliamentary desire for more

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 16-18 and 38-40.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 40.



control in the affairs of the Army. The appointment of the Secretary of State for War placed the general policy of the governing of the Army in the hands of a civilian person who held an office of the highest rank and who was responsible to Parliament. He was responsible for military policy, military strength and the conduct of operations. Prior to this appointment, with the exception of the Secretary at War in financial affairs, no one in the Army hierarchy had been directly accountable to Parliament because the command, government and disposition of the Army were included in the royal prerogative. Up until the late eighteenth-century, Parliament had tended to shy away from close association with the military forces because of its traditional fear of a standing army. Parliament felt that its check upon the finances of the Army prevented abuse of royal power and that if the military and civilian elements were united in the administration of the Army, the military would dominate and Parliament's check would be lost.<sup>7</sup>

The Secretary of State for War had no authority in regard to the exercise of the royal prerogative. The prerogative had been and was exercised variously by the Secretary at War and the Commander in Chief, each independent of the other, and who struggled between themselves for control of the Army. Meanwhile, the Secretary of State for War, with only

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 40-41 and W.S. Hamer, The British Army: Civil-Military Relations, 1885-1905 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 6.

vaguely defined powers, soon receded into the background. In fact, his status and power with regard to the Army decreased so much that in 1801 he assumed charge of the Colonies in addition to his other duties.<sup>8</sup>

The conflict between the Commander in Chief and the Secretary at War, who, despite the erosion of his former authority, remained greatly influential because of his continued control of the Army's purse strings, represented another issue making itself known as Parliament gradually encroached upon the royal authority over the Army. This issue was that of military resentment at, and resistance to civilian intrusion in the administration of the Army. The officer corps, steeped in tradition, was unwilling to accept changes it considered detrimental to the best interests of the Army, the Crown and the country.<sup>9</sup> The soldiers therefore wanted to retain the special connection of the Army with the Monarchy in order to protect the appointments, promotions and discipline of the Army from political interference.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Gordon, The War Office, p. 41. The incumbent was henceforth referred to as the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies.

<sup>9</sup>Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, pp. x and 67.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 6. The soldiers also opposed any civilian-initiated reform which might upset their privileged position. Army officers, mostly the sons of landed and propertied classes, according to Hamer reflected in their customs and habits "the tone and quality of the society from whence . . . [they] came." The regimental mess was an exclusive private club where, again according to Hamer, "by rigid class distinction and a well-defined ritual, the social attitudes proper to an officer-gentleman and the traditions of the regiment were zealously main-

Because the civilian and military elements had remained separate and relatively independent before the Crimean War, the issue of civil-military relations had remained dormant for the most part.<sup>11</sup> However, the issue came to the surface with the reorganization of the War Office in 1855 which occurred as the result of adverse public opinion over early setbacks in the Crimean War. The reorganization placed the military directly under the authority of the civilian Secretary of State for War and led to conflict between the civil and military elements over the question of control of the Army and over the encroachment of civil authorities into military affairs.<sup>12</sup>

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tained." Polo ponies, hounds, fine crystal, expensive silver, wine cellars, private bands and theatricals were all characteristic of regimental messes. (Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, pp. 14-15).

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>12</sup>Purchase of commissions was also a heated issue, but is dealt with only peripherally in this inquiry as I feel that a detailed discussion would only detract from the main concern and would not appreciably add to an understanding of the operation of the War Office itself.



## C H A P T E R   I I

### INEFFICIENCY, NEGLIGENCE AND THE CRIMEAN WAR

On the eve of the Crimean War, the Army was administered by a number of separate, distinct and mutually independent authorities who communicated with each other by letter and who were connected only by their common subordination to the Government.<sup>1</sup>

The Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, a Cabinet officer, was responsible for submitting to the Crown the Cabinet's determination of the size of the force to be maintained and for making known to the Commander in Chief of the Army the establishment thus decided upon. He was also responsible for the allocation of garrisons to Colonial possessions, for the conveyance of the Government's orders to the officers commanding abroad and, in wartime, for the selection of officers to command in chief and for the control of operations bearing on the conduct of the war.<sup>2</sup>

Another Cabinet officer, the Home Secretary, was

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix A for a listing of these authorities and their duties.

<sup>2</sup>Great Britain, Parliament, Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire Into the Practicability of Consolidating the Different Departments Connected with the Civil Administration of the Army. Military and Naval Parliamentary Paper, Vol. 4 (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1971 [originally published 1837]), p. 13. Hereinafter referred to as 1837 Report on Civil Administration of the Army.

responsible for the militia, for the geographical distribution of the Army at home (in consultation with the Commander in Chief) and for general military questions relating to Great Britain.<sup>3</sup>

The Secretary at War, a junior, non-Cabinet member of the Government, held a seat in Parliament and was responsible to Parliament for everything relating to the finance of the Army and to the contact of the Army with the civil population. In regard to the former function, he prepared and submitted the annual Army Estimates to Parliament and checked and controlled the details of military expenditure. However, even though he prepared and submitted the Army Estimates to Parliament, he did not determine the size of the force to be maintained, which, in itself, was the very foundation of the Estimates. Furthermore, although he could prevent the Army or any portion of it from moving (which entailed expense), he could not move it on his own volition. He also lacked control over the Artillery and the Engineers and over the arms and supplies of the Army. In regard to the contact of the Army with the civil population, he held responsibility for the protection of civil subjects against oppression and misconduct by

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<sup>3</sup>The militia had been abolished shortly after the Napoleonic Wars and was revived in 1852. The disembodied (inactive) militia was under the Home Secretary. A committee in the House of Commons prepared the Militia Estimates while the Secretary at War dealt with all questions of finance and internal arrangements of the regiments. (General Sir Robert Biddulph, Lord Cardwell at the War Office [London: John Murray, 1904], p. 7).

the Army. Accordingly, his sanction and authority were required in such matters as quartering, billeting and marching of troops, which brought soldiers into contact with civilians.<sup>4</sup>

Notwithstanding the limitations on him, the Secretary at War, who in theory had little influence, was in practice all but supreme. This predominance was because of his control of the Army's finances and because he had become, in practice, the person in Parliament who answered questions dealing with the administration and the discipline of the Army. The Secretary at War could thus interfere in the internal affairs of the Army and in the affairs of the various other administrative authorities as well.<sup>5</sup>

The Commander in Chief was a military officer subordinate, in theory, only to the Crown. He was responsible for the discipline and the efficiency of the Cavalry and the

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<sup>4</sup>Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, pp.4-5; 1837 Report on Civil Administration of the Army, pp. 14 and 16-17; and G.R. Gleig, "Reform of the War Department," Edinburgh Review, October, 1954, p. 276. Gleig had been appointed Chaplain General by Sidney Herbert when Herbert was Secretary at War (1844-46). Gleig retained this office through the reorganization and was also a well-known military biographer. (See Brian Bond, The Victorian Army and the Staff College, 1854-1914 [London: Eyre Methuen, 1972], p. 57).

<sup>5</sup>1837 Report on Civil Administration of the Army, p. 14; Gleig, "War Departments," p. 276; and testimony of Lord Panmure, a former Secretary at War, Great Britain, Parliament, Report from the Select Committee on Army and Ordnance Expenditure. Military and Naval Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 5 (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1971 [originally published 1860]), p. 74. Hereinafter referred to as 1860 Report on Military Organization.



Infantry, the enlistment of their soldiers, the commissioning and promotion of their officers, (subject to the sanction of the Monarch) and for recommending to the Sovereign the officers who were to be entrusted with commands, subject always to the previous approval of the Home Secretary for forces in the British Isles and the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies for foreign and Colonial commands. The Commander in Chief also commanded the forces at home, but his authority was limited to troops in Great Britain and Ireland. He had control neither over troops abroad nor over the supply of arms and stores, fortifications, the Artillery and the Engineers. Furthermore, he could not order the movement of troops without the previous sanction of the Secretary at War.<sup>6</sup>

Another major administrative authority, the Board of Ordnance, was subordinate to the Government and consisted of the Master General of Ordnance, the Board's head and a military officer of high rank, the Surveyor General, the Clerk of Ordnance and the Principal Storekeeper. The Board was responsible for the so-called civil duties of the Ordnance Department. These duties included the provision of all arms and military stores of every description, the preparation and submission of the

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<sup>6</sup>Gordon, The War Office, p. 50 and Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, p. 3. The Commander in Chief had three principal assistants: the Military Secretary who was responsible mainly for correspondence, the Adjutant General who was responsible mainly for the personnel aspects of the Army (e.g., recruiting, discipline, etc.) and the Quartermaster-General who was responsible mainly for logistics and the movement of the Army. (Barnett, Britain and Her Army, p. 240; Bond, Staff College, p. 12; and Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, p. 12).

Ordnance Estimates to Parliament, the clothing of the Artillery and Engineers, the construction and repair of fortifications, military works and barracks, and the supply of fuel, light, miscellaneous articles, provisions and forage for troops in Great Britain and Ireland.<sup>7</sup>

The Master General of Ordnance directed the Artillery and Engineers in all matters of discipline, pay and allowances, appointments, promotions and orders regarding their employment.<sup>8</sup> This responsibility constituted the military function of the Ordnance Department and lay entirely in the hands of the Master General of Ordnance. The Master General was assisted by the Inspector General of Fortifications, a military officer of high rank, and by the Deputy Adjutant General, Royal Engineers. The Inspector General of Fortifications advised on questions of works and buildings in the charge of the Royal Engineers and supervised Engineer employment. The Deputy Adjutant General, Royal Engineers, administered the discipline of the Corps. In his artillery responsibilities, the Master General was assisted by the Deputy Adjutant General of Artillery who administered the discipline of the Royal Artillery and by

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<sup>7</sup>Gordon, The War Office, pp. 14-15; Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, p. 6; and 1837 Report on Civil Administration of the Army, pp. 14-15.

<sup>8</sup>Appointments in the Artillery and Engineers were entirely at the discretion of the Master General of Ordnance and were not subject to purchase as were those in the Infantry and Cavalry. (Testimony of General Sir John Fox Burgoyne, the Inspector General of Fortifications since 1845, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 264).



the Director General of Artillery who was in charge of armaments and ammunition and who advised on scientific questions and dealt with experiments and new patterns or arms. Although the Board of Ordnance as a whole was responsible for the superintendence of the so-called civil duties of the Ordnance Department, the Master General of Ordnance ruled supreme in all matters.<sup>9</sup>

The supply of provisions, fuel and light, forage, transport and money to the troops abroad was the responsibility of the Commissariat Department, under the management of the Treasury.<sup>10</sup> The Colonels of the several regiments provided clothing for the Infantry and the Cavalry and the inspection of this clothing was the responsibility of the Board of General Officers.<sup>11</sup> The one remaining major adminis-

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<sup>9</sup>Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, pp. 6-7; 1837 Report on Civil Administration of the Army, p. 15; and testimony of Colonel W.F.D. Jervois, a member of the Royal Engineers since 1839, Great Britain, Parliament, Reports of a Committee Appointed to Inquire Into the Arrangements in Force For the Conduct of Business in the Army Departments. Military and Naval Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 4 (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1971 [originally published 1870]), p. 430. Hereinafter referred to as 1870 Report on the Army Departments.

<sup>10</sup>Testimony of John William Smith, the Commissary-General in Chief, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 268 and Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, p. 6. The Treasury prepared the Annual Estimates of the Commissariat which were entirely distinct from the Army Estimates and the Ordnance Estimates. (Great Britain, Parliament, Report from the Select Committee on Army and Ordnance Expenditure. Military and Naval Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 4 [Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1971 (originally published 1851)], p. 254).

<sup>11</sup>Gordon, The War Office, p. 50 and Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, p. 7.



trative body, the Medical Department, provided medical stores and medical personnel.<sup>12</sup>

This brief description alone demonstrates the unwieldiness and inefficiency of the system of Army administration. The Army served several independent masters at the same time, and no intermediary body co-ordinated the functions, orders and activities of the several authorities with each other and with the Army itself. The Artillery and Engineers alone in the Army had complete unity in their administration, serving as they did under the sole management of the Master General of Ordnance. The Cavalry and Infantry came under the Commander in Chief for discipline and efficiency, the Board of General Officers for clothing, the Secretary at War for matters of a financial nature, the Board of Ordnance for supplies and the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies for operations abroad. The Medical Department also had five immediate superiors: the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, the Secretary at War, the Commander in Chief (for discipline), the Master General of Ordnance and the Board of Ordnance.<sup>13</sup>

Such a system resulted in a great deal of conflict of

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<sup>12</sup>Gordon, The War Office, p. 50.

<sup>13</sup>Testimony of Andrew Smith, the Director General of the Medical Department since 1853, Report from the Select Committee on Medical Department (Army) (1856, Vol. XIII, p. 359), p. 374. Hereinafter referred to as 1856 Medical Department.

interest, multiplication of correspondence and needless confusion in the transaction of business. For example, with the previous sanction of the Crown and the Colonial Minister, the Commander in Chief could assemble and send abroad a force of infantry and cavalry but he could not command any artillery and engineer support for it. For that he depended upon the Master General of Ordnance. Meanwhile, the Secretary at War could stop the entire operation by withholding necessary funds. The arming of the force, let alone the entire Army, depended on the Board of Ordnance.<sup>14</sup>

The procedure necessary to issue arms to the Infantry and Cavalry was in itself complicated. The Commander in Chief notified formally the Secretary at War of the requirements for arms of a regiment. The Secretary at War then wrote to the Home Secretary requesting him to signify the Crown's pleasure to the Master General of Ordnance and the Board of Ordnance for the issuance of the necessary arms. The subsequent letter by the Home Secretary then became the proper authority for furnishing the arms by the Ordnance Department.<sup>15</sup>

A further example of the ponderous procedures of administration was the method of accomplishing appointments

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<sup>14</sup>In fact, a force destined in the Fall of 1854 to embark for the Crimea was "detained considerably beyond the stated period" because the Board either neglected or forgot to give directions for the issuance of rifles to the men. (Gleig, "War Departments," pp. 277-78).

<sup>15</sup>1837 Report on Civil Administration of the Army,  
p. 14.

and promotions in the Infantry and Cavalry. The Commander in Chief, as mentioned above, took the Crown's pleasure in this sphere. He prepared a memorandum containing names approved by him which he forwarded to the Secretary at War. The Secretary at War then extracted the names from the memorandum and prepared two lists, one containing names for regiments serving abroad, the other for those serving at home. The former list went to the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies and the latter to the Home Secretary. These ministers then prepared the commissions and forwarded them to the Sovereign for signature. The commissions were then returned to the appropriate minister for countersignature.<sup>16</sup>

This then was the situation in Army administration on the eve of the Crimean War--the first large-scale war the British Army had been called upon to fight since Waterloo. The system of Army administration, virtually the same as that of 1815 and allowed to languish since then, was now put to a severe test.

The British Army was totally unprepared to wage war on a continental scale. Since Waterloo, Britain's island position and her Empire had been protected by her strong Navy. The Army had acted merely as a reasonably effective police force capable of dealing with disturbances within the British

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 13. See also the testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, the Permanent Under Secretary of State, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 157 and 161.



Empire.<sup>17</sup> The Army's only enemies had for the most part been undisciplined and ill-equipped and Parliament had seen no need for modernization or reform in either administration or organization. Consequently, during the forty years of relative peace since Waterloo, Parliament had been reluctant to vote funds for the Army and had allowed many important military institutions to degenerate. In the words of historian Correlli Barnett: "War became a noise far away. The national sense of danger, the sense of struggle between nations, was atrophied."<sup>18</sup>

As long as the Army Estimates had remained low, the Army had been ignored. Thus, at the outset of the Crimean War, all preparations for large-scale warfare had to start from scratch. The several authorities at the head of the Army immediately set to work at preparing the Army to fight; unfortunately, their actions were neither co-ordinated nor synchronized. It was, as G.R. Gleig states, "physically impossible for so many different departments to give the necessary impulse at the same moment to each separate part of a machine so complicated and yet so homogeneous as an Army."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> John Gooch, The Plans of War: The General Staff and British Military Strategy c. 1900-1916 (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974), pp. 1-2.

<sup>18</sup> Barnett, Britain and Her Army, p. 273.

<sup>19</sup> Gleig, "War Departments," p. 279. See also, G.M. Trevelyan, History of England, Vol. III (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953), p. 198.

It was much easier and quicker for the Commander in Chief to assemble and ship a force of infantry and cavalry, along with artillery provided by the Master General of Ordnance, than it was for the Commissariat to provide food and land transport. Furthermore, the Commissariat had virtually lain dormant since 1815, because the supply of food and forage at home was a Board of Ordnance responsibility and because transport at home was mostly by railroad, not by horseback. Unfortunately, Commissariat operations during colonial wars of the past forty years had scarcely provided the expertise and organization necessary for the impending large-scale operations. In addition, the organization used by Wellington for land transport, the Waggon Train, had disbanded in the interest of economy after 1815. Therefore, at the time of the Crimean War, no nucleus organization for land transport even existed, forcing the Commissariat to improvise from the start. The Commissariat was thus left behind in the race of authority against authority with each hurrying the employment of his charges so that the several elements necessary to render the Army effective arrived piecemeal in the Crimea.<sup>20</sup>

The result was that at the time of the British invasion of the Crimea, the army in the field was deficient in transport, baggage animals and supplies of all kinds, including medicines. When the British landed at Calamita Bay on

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<sup>20</sup>Gleig, "War Departments," p. 279.

September 14, 1854, they had no base and no idea of the nature of the country ahead of them--the only reconnaissance of the Crimea having been made at sea from a distance. Furthermore, they had neither ambulances, litters nor food.<sup>21</sup> As Cecil Woodham-Smith states: "all was flung on the known, the extraordinary fighting quality of British troops. The quality of the troops would compensate for everything."<sup>22</sup> Compensate they eventually did, but at the cost of 25,000 British lives, many of them sacrificed needlessly as the result of the inefficiency of the existing system of Army administration and of the absence of any reform of it during the forty year interval after Waterloo.

On June 12, 1854, the Queen appointed the Duke of Newcastle Secretary of State for War, thus separating the old designation of Secretary of State for War and the Colonies into two distinct Cabinet positions. The only actual change, however, was the separation of colonial and military duties. No increased powers went to the new minister.<sup>23</sup> Also, he had no separate office for his department and no mandate describing his new position. Furthermore, as the previous office had been

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<sup>21</sup>Cecil Woodham-Smith, The Reason Why (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1860), p. 169.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 136.

<sup>23</sup>Reports from Committees: Army Before Sebastopol (1854-55, Vol. IX) 3d Report, Vol. IX, pt. 2, p. 109. Hereinafter referred to as 3d Report ABS.



overwhelmingly preoccupied with colonial affairs, no precedents existed to guide the new Secretary of State. His Under Secretaries were also new to their work; thus, he had no experienced aides. Consequently, the minister himself soon became preoccupied with matters of detail while matters of "paramount importance" were postponed.<sup>24</sup>

In order to direct the war, the Secretary of State for War corresponded separately with several authorities. He communicated with the Commander in Chief on matters relating to the movement of the Cavalry and the Infantry, with the Master General of Ordnance regarding the movement of the Artillery and the Engineers, with the Treasury about the Commissariat and with the Board of Ordnance concerning military supplies. The major stumbling block, however, was the fact that the Commissariat was a separate department under the Treasury and was not subordinate to the Secretary of State for War in wartime as were the military departments.<sup>25</sup>

In his communications with the Commissariat, the Duke of Newcastle explained the Army's intentions and the number of men to be supplied. He did not interfere with the department to any extent afterward, as he "expected them to carry out the necessary arrangements for . . . provisions and transport."<sup>26</sup> In addition, the Commissariat did not report

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<sup>24</sup> Reports from Committees: Army Before Sebastopol (1854-55, Vol. IX) 5th Report, Vol. IX, pt. 3, p. 370. Hereinafter referred to as 5th Report ABS.

<sup>25</sup> 3d Report ABS, pp. 109 and 121.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

officially to the Secretary of State for War who was thus not officially informed of Commissariat operations.<sup>27</sup>

This situation was indeed unfortunate, since it was the duty of the Commissariat to furnish the army in the field with provisions, forage and land transport, the lack of which had much to do with the appalling conditions of the army in the Crimea.

The British established a camp on the heights before the Russian fortress of Sevastopol, seven miles from the nearest British port at Balaclava. Here in 1854-55 the army was destined to endure unprepared the rigors of winter. As stated by the Parliamentary Committee which, in 1855, investigated the condition of the army before Sevastopol, the soldiers were exposed "to all the sufferings and inconveniences of cold, rain, mud, and snow, on high ground and in the depth of winter. They suffered from fatigue, exposure, want of clothing, insufficient supplies for the healthy, and imperfect accomodation for the sick."<sup>28</sup> Another Parliamentary body which, in 1856, reported on the state of supply of the army in the Crimea, concluded that the death rate of the army in the Crimea from 1 October 1854 to 30 April 1855 (approximately 35% of the average strength of the army present during that period) was excessive and was "not to be attributed to anything peculiarly unfavorable in the climate, but to overwork, exposure to wet

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>28</sup>5th Report ABS, p. 368.

and cold, improper food, insufficient clothing during part of the winter, and insufficient shelter from inclement weather."<sup>29</sup>

The supply deficiencies most adversely affecting the army before Sevastopol were a lack of fresh meat, vegetables and bread, fuel, hay and straw and, above all, land transport, to which many of the other deficiencies may be attributed.<sup>30</sup> In fact, much of the labor and exposure which the troops had to undergo owed to the want of sufficient land transport.<sup>31</sup> The men themselves were forced to haul supplies and lived in the open because they could not transport sufficient shelter to their camp. The problem was magnified in the late Fall of 1854 when climatic conditions turned the one road between Balaclava and the camp into a virtually impassable quagmire. The construction and maintenance of roads was a responsibility of the Quartermaster-General but the improvement of the road between Balaclava and the camp would have required manpower beyond the amount available to him. Division Commanders, however, unanimously insisted that it would have been impossible to spare a sufficient number of men to repair the road and carry on military operations at the same time. Therefore, the only answer to the problem was an increase in

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<sup>29</sup> Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Supplies of the British Army in the Crimea (1856, Vol. XX, p. 1), p. 7. Hereinafter referred to as Supplies in the Crimea.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 7.



the number of transport animals.<sup>32</sup>

The Commissary-General in the Crimea had previously considered it necessary to have 14,000 pack animals at his disposal, but in January, 1855, he had only 333 pack horses and mules and twelve camels. Asked by the Parliamentary Commission on supplies in the Crimea why he had not increased the number of animals, he replied that he had as many animals as he could feed.<sup>33</sup> The real cause of the deficiency of land transport then seemed to have been a shortage of forage, not a lack of ships or animals. Thus, if the Commissariat had made proper arrangements beforehand as to forage, the situation would have been altered to a great extent.<sup>34</sup>

The Commissariat displayed other serious deficiencies also. The troops were subjected to a diet, which never varied, of salt meat and biscuit without fresh vegetables. Furthermore, much of what they received was not properly cooked because of a lack of fuel. Therefore, the men were subject to scurvy and diseases of the bowels "to an alarming extent." Virtually all medical officers cognizant of the situation agreed that the continued use of salt meat without fresh vegetables increased the men's predisposition to disease and led to an increased mortality rate.<sup>35</sup> The Parliamentary

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 21. See also the 5th Report ABS, p. 377. A Land Transport Corps was later raised to alleviate the transport problem. Independent of the Commissariat, it remained on active duty after the war as the Military Train.

<sup>35</sup>Supplies in the Crimea, pp. 10 and 15.

Commission on supplies in the Crimea later determined that a fresh meat supply could have been obtained from the south shore of the Black Sea and brought in available steam and sail vessels to Balaclava. The Commission concluded that the Commissary-General in the Crimea was "not then sufficiently alive to the importance of that article of food" and that fresh meat might have been, and should have been, supplied to the army.<sup>36</sup> The Commission reached the same conclusion in regard to fresh vegetables. The Commissary-General himself admitted that the army had a sufficient store of rice available but blamed the lack of land transport for his inability to supply it to the troops.<sup>37</sup>

The lack of land transport also affected the supply of medical provisions. In fact, not until the middle of February, 1855, was the camp provided with sufficient medical supplies.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, lack of supplies was not all that plagued the treatment of the sick and wounded in the Crimea. Hospitals were totally inadequate. They were overcrowded, understaffed and lacked such basic items as cots, mattresses and straw to fill what mattresses they did have. The "dreadful discomfort" of the men and the neglect on the part of the medical authorities were exemplified by the fact that during the month of November, 1854, there were approximately 2000 patients in the barrack hospital at Scutari but only six

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 16

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 42.

shirts were washed during that entire period.<sup>39</sup> At one point the average number of patients who died under such conditions was forty-two out of every one hundred.<sup>40</sup> The performance and reforming actions of Florence Nightingale to amend these conditions is legendary.

Supply problems were compounded by the fact that there was no one person in the Crimea in overall charge of the supply of the army there. The Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Purveyors (responsible under the Medical Department, for hospital supplies except medicines), the Quartermaster-General and the Commissariat all had charge of their own stores as well as specific stores (e.g., food by the Commissariat). Since no one head co-ordinated supplies, the result was, in the words of Captain Henry William Gordon, Ordnance Storekeeper in the Crimea, that "no one knew what stores were with the army." One department might have deficiencies and another surpluses.<sup>41</sup> Gordon cited as an example the lack of warm clothing at a time when the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers and Purveyors had a "superabundance or at any rate a surplus

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<sup>39</sup> 5th Report ABS, p. 385.

<sup>40</sup> This figure was later reduced to two out of every one hundred after improvements were made in conditions. (J.W. Fortescue, A History of the British Army, Vol XIII [London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1930], p. 156).

<sup>41</sup> Report of a Committee Appointed by the Secretary of State for War to Enquire into the Administration of the Transport and Supply Departments of the Army (1967, Vol. XV, p. 343), p. 409. Hereinafter referred to as 1867 Report on Supply.



of such articles." Unfortunately, the Commander in Chief had no authority regarding the distribution of supplies and could do nothing about the situation.<sup>42</sup>

Another major problem area of the army in the Crimea lay in the field of ordnance. At the beginning of the war, after forty years of relative peace, there were not enough shells in the arsenal at Woolwich to arm the field army properly. Furthermore, many of the fuses in the store dated from Waterloo. Parliamentary unwillingness to allocate funds to the military forces in the intervening years had prevented efficient progress in the production of armaments with the result that the arsenal was totally unprepared to furnish ample ordnance for a large-scale war. Shot, shell ammunition and gunpowder were lacking, and the Government was eventually forced to look to private manufacturers for these supplies and pay their exorbitant prices. In the end, England even had to turn to foreign sources, as private British manufacturers could not meet the demand.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 430. Eventually, near the end of the war, all stores in the Crimea were consolidated under the Ordnance Department to the "great relief" of the troops there. (Testimony of Major Arthur Leahy, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General in the Crimea, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 531). Captain Gordon directed the operation and was accountable only to the General Officer Commanding in the Crimea. (Testimony of Gordon, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 509 and testimony of Gordon, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 409).

<sup>43</sup>Andrew Wynter, "Woolwich Arsenal and its Manufacturing Establishments," London Quarterly Review, January, 1858, p. 122. England got 44,000 guns, 3000 cavalry swords and 12,000 barrels of powder from Liege and 20,000 barrels of powder from the United States.

The Crimean War was unique in that military correspondents living with the troops in the field, using the steamship and the railroad, brought news of the war to Britain much quicker than had been possible before. The result was that the experiences of the troops before Sevastopol and the workings of the military system became known and consequently unacceptable to the English public. As Correlli Barnett states: "For the first time in history the nation knew what its soldiers were going through, and cared."<sup>44</sup>

The Government in power, especially the Duke of Newcastle, necessarily bore the brunt of the public's wrath and had to answer for the sins of previous governments which had for forty years neglected the Army. This was unfortunate in that the fault clearly lay with the system of administration itself, much more so than with its administrators, and with Parliament for having allowed the system to remain in a state of such torpor for so long. Nonetheless, the end result of the public outcry was the resignation of the Government in January, 1855, and the hurried reorganization of Army administration by its successor.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Barnett, Britain and Her Army, p. 285.

<sup>45</sup> Trevelyan, History of England, III, p. 200 and Fortescue, British Army, XIII, p. 162. The reorganization came too late to be of any real impact in the Crimea. Sevastopol finally fell in September, 1855, and a peace was signed on March 30, 1856.

## CHAPTER III

### REORGANIZATION 1855-1860

#### General

After the unfortunate scapegoats had departed, the new Government under Lord Palmerston had to rectify quickly the situation or risk suffering the same fate as its predecessor. The incoming ministers therefore chose to reorganize the system of Army administration immediately, notwithstanding the fact that the midst of a Continental war was not necessarily the best time to do so. Consequently, the reorganization was hasty and was effected without a general overall plan with defined principles. It was, as the noted historian of the British Army, J.W. Fortescue, states, a headlong expedient of "a Cabinet of terrified men, anxious to still popular clamour and eager to show that they were doing something."<sup>1</sup> They did more than just "something." By the time they were through, the upper levels of Army administration were, to outward appearances at least, completely overhauled.

Actually, the reorganization had begun under the previous Government with the transfer in December, 1854, of the Commissariat from the Treasury to the War Department.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Fortescue, British Army, XIII, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup>The War Department was the name used to refer to the office of the Secretary of State for War--the War Office was



However, not until the advent of the new Government were other changes made. In an attempt to meet the most obvious need of the Army, namely, a unifying force to pull together all the various elements of Army administration in order to more effectively supervise and direct the preparedness and operations of the Army, the new Government made the most important innovation of all. In February, 1855, one man, Lord Panmure (formerly Fox Maule) was appointed to be both Secretary at War and Secretary of State for War thus effectively combining the offices into one--the Secretary of State for War. Panmure had felt that the condition of the army before Sevastopol was "solely to be attributed to the want of proper control by a single Minister of every department of the Army."<sup>3</sup> Therefore, he became the guiding force for the consolidation of the two offices. He saw the combination of the offices as being necessary for the "more speedy transaction of business, and for giving the servant of the Crown who was responsible for military administration, more defined and more extended powers than he had under the old system as Secretary at War."<sup>4</sup>

A Royal Patent issued in May, 1855, made the consolidation of

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the Secretary at War's office. Not until 1857 did the establishment headed by the Secretary of State for War become known as the War Office. (Gordon, The War Office, pp. 51-52). Many people, though, continued to refer to the War Office as the "War Department."

<sup>3</sup>Sir George Douglas and Sir George Dalhousie Ramsay, eds., The Panmure Papers, Vol. I (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1908), pp. 47-48.

<sup>4</sup>Testimony of Lord Panmure, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 74.

the positions official.<sup>5</sup>

The next major change involved the Board of Ordnance. Lord Panmure engineered its abolition so that the Secretary of State for War could present to the House of Commons in one view and in one estimate the entirety of the country's military expenses, instead of having three separate estimates as before (the Secretary at War for the Army of the Line, the Master General of Ordnance for the Artillery and the Scientific Corps, and the Treasury for the Commissariat). Furthermore, Panmure had found that when he was Secretary of State for War and the old Board of Ordnance still existed, he had had to go through a "vast system" of correspondence just to communicate orders. He felt it would be better if the Secretary of State for War could issue these orders directly himself. Moreover, by controlling the departments which executed these orders, he would attain greater speed and efficiency. Consolidation with his office would also enable the Secretary of State for War to ascertain immediately the condition of the warlike stores and all the other types of stores.<sup>6</sup>

Consequently, an Order in Council of June, 1855, abolished the Board and, in its place, several officers were

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<sup>5</sup>"Extract from Third Part Patent Roll of the Eighteenth year of the Reign of Queen Victoria, 22 May 1855," 1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 2, p. 610.

<sup>6</sup>Testimony of Lord Panmure, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 81-82 and 89.



appointed heads of departments under the Secretary of State for War (Appendix B).<sup>7</sup> The military command of the Artillery was transferred to the Commander in Chief, but the Inspector General of Fortifications, now directly responsible to the Secretary of State for War, retained the command of the Engineers. The Inspector General of Fortifications also functioned as an adviser to the Secretary of State for War on questions of maintenance and improvement of fortifications and on construction of barracks and other buildings. His duties as an adviser thus essentially dealt with the so-called civil side of Engineer functions while his other duties as commander of the Royal Engineers dealt with military matters.<sup>8</sup> The Secretary of State for War also retained the position of Director General of Artillery to advise on artillery and ammunition.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Order in Council, dated June 6, 1855, 1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 1, pp. 595-98. The business connected with both the Medical Department and the Home Department (regarding the Militia) had been transferred to the War Department soon after Panmure took office.

<sup>8</sup> Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, the Permanent Under Secretary of State, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 123.

<sup>9</sup> The Secretary of State for War also appointed a Naval Director of Artillery to advise on naval ordnance because the Manufacturing Departments at Woolwich, formerly under the Board of Ordnance and now under the Secretary of State for War, produced naval armaments as well as those of the Army. The position did not endure long, however. As the job actually entailed little work, in an economy move, the Director, Navy Captain J.C. Caffin, was also appointed the Director General of Stores and Clothing in 1857. This was a new position resulting from the amalgamation of the Stores and Clothing departments. Caffin retained the duties of his former position in his new one even though the formal position of Naval Director of Artillery was



The Director General of Stores assumed the bulk of the duties of the former Principal Storekeeper. These duties mainly dealt with the superintendence of actions regarding the receipt, custody, control and issue of military stores. The Director General of Contracts supplied all military and other stores by means of public competition and contracts and superintended the execution of all agreements made by him up to the time of their final completion. The Director General of Army Clothing provided clothing to the Army. The Board of General Officers was therefore eliminated. Lastly, the Accountant General now controlled, audited and brought to account the entire receipts and expenditure of Army administration.<sup>10</sup>

Although the clerical staffs of the various departments were consolidated in the Secretary of State for War's Office in January, 1856, the new organization was not officially fixed until February, 1857, by an Order in Council. The positions of Clerk of Ordnance, Deputy Secretary at War, Naval Director of Artillery and Director General of Clothing were eliminated and an Assistant Under Secretary of State and a Secretary for Military Correspondence were added. Also, the Director General of Stores' duties were expanded to include

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eliminated. (Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 121).

<sup>10</sup> Order in Council, dated June 6, 1855, 1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 1, pp. 595-98.

the superintendence of clothing.<sup>11</sup>

The War Office was further consolidated by the establishment of its various departments in 1858 under one roof in Pall Mall, except for the Medical Department and the Inspector General of Fortifications' Office which were located at Whitehall. The most obvious and important exception though was the Commander in Chief's office which remained at the Horse Guards.<sup>12</sup>

At this time it is possible to make a general comparison of cost and personnel between the old and the new organizations.

In terms of economy, the reorganization did not save the British nation any money. The chart below details the cost of the military control establishment from two years before the consolidation to four years after it using 1855 as the basic year of the union.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Order in Council, dated February 2, 1857. Panmure retained the Clerk of Ordnance to provide continuity of administration between the old and new organizations. (1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 86) The organization and duties of each of the departments thus fixed are indicated in Appendix C.

<sup>12</sup>Gordon, The War Office, p. 58, and testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 129. The term "Horse Guards" referred to the Commander in Chief's office. The Horse Guards was the name given to a building near Whitehall in London located on the grounds where Charles II had housed his mounted troops. Before the reorganization, the office of the Secretary of War, as well as that of the Commander in Chief, was located there. (Gordon, The War Office, p. 31).

<sup>13</sup>Returns of the Annual Establishment Charges of the

|         | <u>War<br/>Dept.</u> | <u>War<br/>Office</u> | <u>Ord.<br/>Dept.</u> | <u>Commis-<br/>sariat</u> | <u>Miscel-<br/>laneous</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|---------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
|         | £                    | £                     | £                     | £                         | £                          | £            |
| 1853-54 | -----                | 32,947                | 65,484                | 4996                      | 13,537                     | 116,964      |
| 1854-55 | 9.983                | 36,760                | 62,268                | 4678                      | 14,569                     | 127,658      |
| 1855-56 | 22,932               | 49,053                | 70,873                | 5082                      | 16.559                     | 164,499      |
| 1856-57 | 179,878              | -----                 | -----                 | -----                     | -----                      | 179,878      |
| 1857-58 | 166,968              | -----                 | -----                 | -----                     | -----                      | 166,968      |
| 1858-59 | 169,029              | -----                 | -----                 | -----                     | -----                      | 169,029      |

As indicated, there is a difference of more than £ 50,000 in cost between 1853-54, when there was peace and the Army was administered under the old system, and 1858-59 when there was again peace but the Army was under new organization. The increase in cost resulted from several factors. First and foremost, the increased business caused by the Crimean War necessitated the hiring of additional temporary personnel to assist permanent clerks with the workload. In 1855, therefore, before the consolidation of clerical staffs under the Secretary of State for War, there were 506 clerks (321 permanent, 185 temporary) employed in the various departments. As a result of the hiring of temporary clerks, by 1855-56 the cost of the establishment had risen nearly £ 50,000 and it remained

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Departments now Consolidated in that of War, for Four Years previous to their Consolidation: And, of the Annual Establishment Charges of the Department of War since such Consolidation up to the present Time (1857-58, Vol. XXXVII, p. 589), p. 589 and "An Account of the Annual Charge of the United Establishment," 1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 2, p. 626. These figures do not include the Commander in Chief's office.



relatively constant for the next three years, even though 1858-59 was a year of virtual peace. Although the increased business caused by the Indian Mutiny in 1857-58 required the retention of the temporary clerks, the real reason that costs remained high was the result of the organization itself. The formation of the consolidated War Office under the Secretary of State for War greatly increased the workload of that office. The formation of the Clothing Department alone justified the maintenance of a large clerical staff. However, when the increased business caused by the formation of this one department was combined with the increases occasioned by the transfer of business from other offices to the War Office, along with the other inherent business of the office, the increase in volume was enormous and a larger staff became a necessity.<sup>14</sup> As a result, clerical personnel were not released after hostilities in India were concluded and, in 1859, there were 513 clerks employed in the War Office.<sup>15</sup>

The number and total salaries of principal officers (i.e., supervisory personnel, department heads and principal secretaries) also remained remarkably stable throughout the period. The chart below depicts the changes in the upper ranks

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<sup>14</sup>In 1853 a total of 162,088 letters were received and 201,000 were written by the several departments administering the Army. In 1859, 332,631 letters were received by the War Office and 518,906 were written. (1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 124-25 [testimony of Hawes] and Appendix 10, p. 707 ["Statement of the Number of Letters Received and Written"]).

<sup>15</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 2, p. 626. Of the 513 clerks employed in 1859-60, 328 were permanent and 185 were temporary. (1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 2, p. 625).

of Army administration (except for the Commander in Chief's office) from 1854 to 1859 in terms of total salary differences and numbers of positions eliminated and added.<sup>16</sup>

|      | number of<br>positions | total<br>salaries | Positions<br>added |                 | Positions<br>eliminated |                 | Add/elim<br>net re-<br>sult | positions<br>net diff.<br>in salary |
|------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|      |                        |                   | #                  | total<br>salary | #                       | total<br>salary |                             |                                     |
| 1854 | 25                     | £26,323           | -                  | -----           | -                       | -----           | --                          | -----                               |
| 1856 | 30                     | £33,200           | 13                 | £17,327         | 8                       | £12,080         | +5                          | +£5247 <sup>17</sup>                |
| 1859 | 29                     | £32,585           | 8                  | £ 8,485         | 9                       | £10,500         | -1                          | -£2015 <sup>18</sup>                |

In terms of numbers then, principal officers did not undergo a drastic change during the reorganization. Even in terms of salary, there was only a £6000 difference between 1854 and 1859, £2000 of which can be attributed to salary increases in retained positions. The largest single addition to the salary figures was the Secretary of State for War at £5000 annually, while the largest single elimination was the Master General of Ordnance at £3000 per year.<sup>19</sup>

The real turbulence in the ranks of the principal officers came in the designation of their positions. For

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<sup>16</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 2, pp. 627-28.

<sup>17</sup>The discrepancy between the sum of this figure and the figure listed as "total salaries" for 1854 with that listed for "total salaries" for 1856 is the result of salary increases totalling £1630 in retained positions.

<sup>18</sup>The discrepancy between the sum of this figure and the figure listed as "total salaries" for 1856 with that listed for "total salaries" for 1859 is the result of salary increases totalling £1400 in retained positions.

<sup>19</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 2, p. 628.



example, only twelve of the twenty five positions extant in 1854 still existed in 1859.<sup>20</sup> Seventeen of the twenty five positions survived in 1856, but thirteen new ones were added, thereby altering the structure of the War Department substantially. However, even though a number of designations were new, many of the principal office-holders were not newcomers to the Army's administrative apparatus. For example, the Secretary of State for War, Lord Panmure, had been the Secretary at War from 1846 to 1852. The Accountant General, Mr. Kirby, had been the Chief Examiner in the Secretary at War's Office before the reorganization and, in his new position, he was responsible for virtually the same duties as before, albeit with several additions.<sup>21</sup> The Assistant Director of Clothing, Mr. Ramsay, had been the Private Secretary to Sidney Herbert, the Secretary at War from 1852 to 1854, and had assisted in the introduction of the new method of clothing the Army. Furthermore, Mr. Monsell, the Clerk of Ordnance; Sir Benjamin Hawes, the Deputy Secretary at War; General Sir John Fox Burgoyne, the Inspector General of Forti-

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<sup>20</sup>Two private secretaries, three members of the Inspector General of Fortification's office, the Director of Surveys, the Director General of the Army Medical Department, two members of the Military Superintendent of Pensioners' office, the Chaplain General and two members of the Solicitor's office. (1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 2, p. 628).

<sup>21</sup>Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 121 and Great Britain, Parliament, Second Report of a Committee Appointed to enquire into the Organization of the War Office. Military and Naval Parliamentary Papers, Vol. 4 (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1971 [originally published 1864]), p. 331. Hereinafter referred to as 1864 War Office.



fications; Sir Alexander Tullock, the Superintendent of Pensioners; Andrew Smith, the Director General of the Medical Department; and Lord Hardinge, the Commander in Chief; all held their positions before the reorganization and retained them after it in virtually the same form.<sup>22</sup>

In conclusion, the reorganization resulted in increased expense, in virtually no change in the total number of personnel employed in Army administration and in little immediate infusion of new personalities into the Army hierarchy. Therefore, analysis of the reorganization must proceed beyond mere numbers and personalities in order to determine and assess real changes.

#### Correspondence and the Conduct of Business within the War Office

After the reorganization, the War Office received and generated an immense amount of correspondence.<sup>23</sup> The conduct

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<sup>22</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 73, 86, 115, 121, 124, 179 and 348; 1856 Medical Department, p. 374; and Woodham-Smith, The Reason Why, p. 130. Mr. Howell, the Director of Contracts, and John R. Godley, The Director General of Stores, were new to Army administration. (1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 120 and 179). The Director of Clothing, Sir T. Troubridge, had been appointed by Panmure after losing both legs at the Battle of Inkerman while serving with the 7th Fusiliers. (Douglas and Ramsay, eds., Panmure Papers, I, p. 227). Available information on the remaining few office-holders immediately before and after the reorganization is vague and no conclusions can be made as to their status.

<sup>23</sup>Incoming correspondence averaged between 900 and 1000 letters a day in 1859 while outgoing correspondence averaged nearly 1500 letters a day. See footnote 14 above.

of its business necessarily revolved around this correspondence and was governed by a complicated system of receipt, registration, dissemination and response.

All correspondence for the War Office arrived in the Registry room in Pall Mall where it was opened, registered and distributed to the proper office, or offices, for action.<sup>24</sup> Upon receipt in the appropriate office, or offices, a letter was first examined by a junior clerk (or several junior clerks) and passed on to the department head. The department head would then forward it, if necessary, to one of the Under Secretaries of State or to the Secretary for Military Correspondence according to a scheme approved by Lord Panmure in August, 1857.<sup>25</sup> By this arrangement the Assistant Under Secretary of State handled financial subjects, stores, clothing and contracts, the Permanent Under Secretary of State took political and miscellaneous subjects and office arrangements, and the Secretary for Military Correspondence the military and professional subjects. Thus, according to this scheme, the proper reporting channels for major department heads were as follows:

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<sup>24</sup>Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 127-28. The system of registration used was the same as that used in the old Secretary at War's office albeit modified and improved.

<sup>25</sup>Memorandum Number 121, War Office, 8 August 1857, 1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 1, p. 600. Panmure established the position of Secretary for Military Correspondence to correspond principally with the Military Secretary at the Horse Guards upon all matters relating to discipline, the distribution and movement of troops and other military matters.

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Director of Stores and Clothing . . . . .                   | Assistant Under Secretary of State    |
| Director of Contracts . . . . .                             | Assistant Under Secretary of State    |
| Inspector General of Fortifications . . . . .               | Permanent Under Secretary of State    |
| Chaplain General and Inspector General of Schools . . . . . | Permanent Under Secretary of State    |
| Commissary General . . . . .                                | Permanent Under Secretary of State    |
| Solicitor . . . . .   | Permanent Under Secretary of State    |
| Director General of Artillery . . . . .                     | Secretary for Military Correspondence |
| Military Superintendent of Pensioners . . . . .             | Secretary for Military Correspondence |

The eventual limit of any one item's progression from bottom to top was determined by its import. Thus, letters of importance eventually went to the Secretary for War by the appropriate person for decision. Papers were transferred from one person to the next by the transmission of the papers (letters) themselves via an elaborate system of minuting, which was nothing more than the independent writing of opinions without discussion on the issues involved. Each person who handled the correspondence (except for registration and distribution) placed his comments either on the letter itself or on an additional sheet (or sheets) and then forwarded the whole to the next indicated person in the chain



as necessary.<sup>26</sup> Documents thereby often ended up much more voluminous than when they arrived at the War Office.

When a decision relating to a letter was made, a junior clerk in an appropriate office prepared the answer and submitted it to the proper person for signature according to a signature scheme approved by Lord Panmure.<sup>27</sup>

As explained by Sir Benjamin Hawes, this elaborate system served as a screening process which offered the Secretary for War the benefit of systematic advice from his subordinates. "Nothing secures the Secretary of State so much against any possible error in an important case," he stated, "as its having come under the deliberate review of the seniors or heads of branches, men most experienced in the office, and the Under Secretaries."<sup>28</sup> Hawes felt that the system worked well and the business of the War Office was "tolerably successfully conducted" by a "good classification of business, a good subdivision of labour, and a continual and cordial co-operation . . . [within the War Office]."<sup>29</sup> He pointed

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<sup>26</sup>Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 110, 127-28 and 130-31. Documents of great importance or those requiring immediate attention were forwarded directly to an Under Secretary or to the Secretary for War if necessary by the Registrar. (1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 133).

The terms "Secretary of State for War" and "Secretary for War" are interchangeable and refer to the same person.

<sup>27</sup>Memorandum Number 202, War Office, 15 January 1858, 1860 Report on Military Organization, Appendix 1, pp. 601-03. For example, letters conveying directly the Queen's pleasure to an officer of state or the Commander in Chief were to be signed by the Secretary for War. Letters to Members of Parliament were to be signed by the Parliamentary Under Secretary and letters addressed to persons holding the equivalent rank of Under Secretary or to key General Officers were to be signed by the Permanent Under Secretary.

<sup>28</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 131. <sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p.136.

out that the average time necessary to process a letter (open, register, distribute, attach former correspondence relating to the same subject, examination by appropriate branch or branches, minute, write answer, signature, copy and register) was four days.<sup>30</sup>

Hawes had been employed as the Deputy Secretary at War before the reorganization, and he compared the average time of answering correspondence in the reorganized War Office favorably with that of his former office. In fact, in 1859, he told the Parliamentary Committee on military organization that, "I am inclined to think that they [letters] are answered more promptly, if you take the average of a large number." He attributed this promptness to the fact that in the old War Office, a paper was not considered in arrears until it had been in the office for fourteen days; thus, people were not under pressure to react promptly. Furthermore, the Crimean War had caused an influx of inexperienced temporary clerks which resulted in a slowdown of work until the clerks gained experience and the new organization stabilized itself.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, in terms of efficiency in handling correspondence, the reorganized War Office apparently more than held its own in comparison to its predecessor--an admirable achievement when one takes into account the increased size and complexity of the reorganized office and the enormous increase in the amount of correspondence between 1853 (363,008

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 133-34.



letters written or received by the departments administering the Army) and 1859 (851,537 letters written or received by the War Office).<sup>32</sup>

Not everyone was as enthusiastic about the system as Hawes, however. That it was not universally accepted is evidenced by dissension over it within senior ranks of the War Office itself. The major complaint, and a well founded one, was that the system was simply too complex. John William Smith, the Commissary General, voiced this view in 1859. Although the average time of answering correspondence compared favorably with the past, Smith felt that the time occupied in the transaction of business in the War Office was still "much slower than it ought to be . . . I consider [the system] to be extremely defective."<sup>33</sup>

As an example of how the system often delayed business by elaborate handling of minute matters, Smith cited the case of a request by his department to increase the salary of a messenger in Malta by a penny a day. As he did not himself have the authority to sanction such a raise, Smith sent a recommendation for approval of it to the office of the Permanent Under Secretary. The recommendation then went from that office to a clerk in the Accountant General's Office, as it was a financial matter, and from there back to the Permanent

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<sup>32</sup>Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 124-25 and Appendix 10, p. 707.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 292.



Under Secretary's office. That office returned it to Smith for comment. He in turn sent it on again to the Permanent Under Secretary's office where it was finally approved by Sir Benjamin Hawes. The entire transaction took nine days and required eight separate written minutes.<sup>34</sup> Smith therefore felt that there was "so much superfluous writing that it becomes excessively troublesome. It is not only a positive discouragement, but it gives a sort of negative feeling to the transaction of business."<sup>35</sup>

Major General Jonathan Peel, the Secretary of State for War from February, 1858, to June, 1859, agreed with Smith that many papers were needlessly delayed by unnecessary minuting, especially those relating to expense. He thus altered the system so that letters went to department heads first, not to junior clerks, and worked down from the top within the departments. Junior clerks still minuted letters but not nearly so much as before, and the alteration of the system resulted in a slight improvement in efficiency. On the other hand, Peel believed that even though registration delayed the distribution of letters, it was important. Registration created a record which prevented the filing away of unwelcome correspondence and which formed a basis for the investigation of complaints concerning a particular letter or department.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 293

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 340.

With the Commander in Chief located at the Horse Guards, the Inspector General of Fortifications and the Medical Department at Whitehall, and the rest of the War Office at Pall Mall, the War Office obviously lacked complete physical unity. This lack was accentuated by the method the War Office adopted for correspondence with both the Commander in Chief's office and the Medical Department. The standard system of minuting, used in correspondence with other subordinate departments, was not applicable to correspondence with these two departments. The War Office communicated with each by letter and correspondence from both was received, registered and distributed just like incoming correspondence from outside agencies, such as the Colonial Office and the Indian Department.<sup>37</sup>

It appears as if there was no definite rationale for this arrangement regarding the Medical Department other than "it has always been so."<sup>38</sup> Actually, since the time of the reorganization, the War Office had largely disregarded the Medical Department. In fact, at the time of the reorganization,

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<sup>37</sup> Testimony of John Robert Godley, Assistant Under Secretary of State for War, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 191. Curiously, correspondence with the Inspector General of Fortifications followed the normal method. Hawes gave no explanation for this situation other than it was contemplated that the office would one day be brought to Pall Mall. (1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 129-30). I would assume therefore, that no one believed that either the Commander in Chief or the Medical Department would be moving to Pall Mall in the immediate future.

<sup>38</sup> Testimony of Godley, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 192.

the Medical Department had received no official document regarding the changes in the War Department. It became aware of them only through "the working of the department" and through the fact that all incoming mail was addressed to it either by the Secretary for War or the Commander in Chief instead of by the several administrative authorities as before.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, the Medical Department was not totally subordinated to the War Office in the conduct of its business and, unlike any other department, it communicated, under its Director's name, directly with the Commander in Chief. Subjects for such correspondence were limited to matters relating to discipline (for which the Commander in Chief was responsible), medical officer requirements for regiments, promotions and recruiting. The department dealt with the Secretary for War in all other matters.<sup>40</sup> The War Office had no way of knowing the substance of the correspondence between the two theoretically subordinate offices but this uncertainty does not seem to have been of great concern. General Peel even went so far as to state that the Medical Department's duties were "more with the Horse Guards" than with the War Office, and that the

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<sup>39</sup>Testimony of Andrew Smith, the Director General of the Medical Department, 1856 Medical Department, p. 374.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid. See also the testimony of His Royal Highness Prince George Duke of Cambridge, Queen Victoria's cousin, who was appointed Commander in Chief in 1856, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 380.



resulting dual correspondence was "a necessary consequence of the double position."<sup>41</sup>

Peel placed great confidence in his subordinates' sense of responsibility to keep him informed of any important developments regarding the Medical Department. "If there was anything which it was necessary for the War Department to know," he stated, "I take for granted that it would be forwarded to that department, either by the Military Secretary or by the Medical Director himself."<sup>42</sup>

By far the most autonomous office under the reorganization was that of the Commander in Chief. The relationship between the Secretary for War and the Commander in Chief had been stipulated in the Royal Patent of May 18, 1855, which officially consolidated the Secretary at War's position with that of the Secretary of State for War. The Patent stated the new Secretary for War's duties in these terms:

the administration and government of our Army . . . and our ordnance, ammunition, arms, armouries, and other stores and provisions, and habiliments of war within our United Kingdom, shall be and the same are hereby wholly committed to and vested in . . . Baron Panmure . . . Excepting always so far as relates to and concerns the military command and discipline of our Army . . . appointments to and promotions in the same . . . [which are] vested in, or regulated by our Commander in Chief of our Forces, or our General

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<sup>41</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 339. See also the testimony of Godley, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 193.

<sup>42</sup>Testimony of Peel, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 339.

commanding our Forces in Chief for the time being.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, the Secretary of State for War and the Commander in Chief were to share in the administration of the Army and the dualism in Army control was to continue officially. The Commander in Chief ruled supreme in military command and discipline and controlled appointments to and promotions in the Army, while the Secretary for War was supreme in all else.

However, regardless of the need for close and immediate contact between the office of the Commander in Chief and the War Office, the latter regarded the Horse Guards as an entirely separate entity in the conduct of business and correspondence. Such correspondence was thus carried out on a formal basis. The formality, of course, increased the work of both offices enormously.<sup>44</sup>

Except in urgent matters, there was no direct letter communication between the Commander in Chief and the Secretary for War. The Under Secretaries had previously objected to the establishment of such a system and General Peel had agreed with them. He felt it absolutely necessary that the Under Secretaries be aware of what was passing between the Horse Guards and the War Office prior to the dispatch of

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<sup>43</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 17 and Royal Patent of May 22, 1855, Appendix 2, p. 610.

<sup>44</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 195 (Godley), 339 (Peel) and 380 (Duke of Cambridge). Between 20,000 and 30,000 letters a year passed between them with an average return time per letter of between six and ten days.

correspondence to the Horse Guards and upon receipt of correspondence therefrom. This factor, along with a copying system used in the War Office to record the substance of all correspondence, were the major reasons why correspondence with the Horse Guards took so long.<sup>45</sup>

Urgent documents, however, went from either the Secretary for War or the Secretary for Military Correspondence directly to the Commander in Chief, who answered them immediately. The opposite was also true in that the Commander in Chief or his Military Secretary often sent urgent papers directly to the Secretary for War. Other important, less pressing materials were often sent without formal correspondence and minuting for the immediate opinion of the Commander in Chief and were returned within an hour to the War Office.<sup>46</sup> The system was thus not totally inflexible.

In conclusion, even though the system of correspondence and the conduct of business was not uniformly applicable to all subordinate elements, and even though it fostered an abundance of often needless and repetitive paperwork, it had come a long way toward solving two of the major deficiencies

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<sup>45</sup>Testimony of General Peel, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 339.

<sup>46</sup>Testimony of Major General Sir Edward Lugard, the Secretary for Military Correspondence, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 228. See also General Peel's testimony, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 339.



of Army administration in the past--namely, lack of unity and communication. As the result of the reorganization, unity of administration was, with the above noted exceptions, a reality and there was no lack of communication among administrative authorities. If anything, there was now an overabundance of communication between them. Thus, Army administration had nearly come full circle--from not enough communication to almost too much communication.

### Civil-Military Relations

Theoretically, the relationship between the Secretary for War and the Commander in Chief was governed by the provisions of the Royal Patent of May 18, 1855. In reality, as the result of historical precedent, the actual relations between these two officials transcended the boundaries of the Patent in a manner which made it clear that the real authority in all matters dealing with the Army was in the hands of the Secretary for War. The Commander in Chief's responsibilities according to the Patent remained his officially, but he could do very little without the sanction of the Secretary for War.<sup>47</sup>

To reiterate, the reorganization of 1855 merely concentrated civil control over the Army into the hands of one person, the Secretary for War.<sup>48</sup> Like the Secretary at War,

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<sup>47</sup> See the testimony of Lord Panmure, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 112.

<sup>48</sup> Testimony of Sidney Herbert, the Secretary at War in 1845-46 and 1852-54 and the Secretary for War in 1859-60, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 519-20. See also 1860

the Secretary for War took an active part in the theoretically privileged domain of the Commander in Chief relating to appointments and promotions. Although the Commander in Chief actually selected the persons, the Secretary for War exercised the general power of sanction, in case of technical irregularities, as each action involved expense. Furthermore, like the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies and the Home Secretary before him, the Secretary for War acted as a sanctioning authority in all cases of appointment to command in military units.<sup>49</sup>

Finally, as the Secretary at War had done, the Secretary for War interfered in the discipline of the Army in cases in which there was Parliamentary interest and in all cases in which the Military came into contact with the civil population.<sup>50</sup> In the past, the Secretary at War had repeatedly discussed with the Commander in Chief these questions and other matters dealing with discipline. The Commander in Chief, for his part, had traditionally sought the opinion of the Cabinet and/or the

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Report on Military Organization, pp. 349 (Duke of Cambridge), 311-12 (Peel), 114 (Panmure), and 157 (Hawes).

<sup>49</sup>Testimony of Sidney Herbert, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 518-19.

<sup>50</sup>Lord Grey, the Secretary at War from 1835 to 1839, had had to debate constantly the question of corporal punishment and defend the Horse Guards on this issue in the House of Commons and on the issue of the wearing of sidearms by soldiers who came into contact with the civil population. Sidney Herbert stated he had had similar experiences. (1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 457 and 516).

War Office on controversial questions such as corporal punishment, the wearing of side arms and the rendering of salutes during religious processions. In all such matters, the Commander in Chief and the Secretary at War had been in constant contact with each other.<sup>51</sup> Thus, like the Secretary at War, the Secretary for War necessarily remained in close touch with the Commander in Chief regarding discipline and everything else dealing with the administration of the Army.

While official communication between the War Office and the Horse Guards was an exercise in bureaucracy to the nth degree, this paper shuffling did not characterize the direct personal contact between the Secretary for War and the Commander in Chief, which, from all available evidence, seems to have been abundant, polite and agreeable to both parties. Lord Panmure felt that communication between himself and the Commander in Chief (Lord Hardinge and later the Duke of Cambridge) was as easy, frequent and confidential as that between himself as Secretary at War and the Commander in Chief before the reorganization.<sup>52</sup> In August, 1859, General Peel noted that "there was hardly a day that I did not see . . . the Commander in Chief" and that no difference of opinion between himself and the Commander in Chief ever emerged on a final decision made by him (Peel).<sup>53</sup> Sidney Herbert also

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<sup>51</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 311-12 (Peel), 457 (Grey) and 349 (Duke of Cambridge).

<sup>52</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 76.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., pp. 341-42.



stated that he saw the Commander in Chief almost daily, and that his relations with the Commander in Chief were perfectly satisfactory.<sup>54</sup> From the other perspective, the Duke of Cambridge agreed that his relations with the Secretary for War were satisfactory. He stated that he called on the Secretary for War nearly every day and that no question had arisen between them over his exercise of the military command and discipline of the Army. He related that he alerted the Secretary for War to every movement of troops at home and abroad and that appointments and promotions were "invariably" referred to him. Furthermore, he stated in August, 1859, that he had never had any difficulty with any of the three Secretaries under which he had served (Panmure, Peel and Herbert).<sup>55</sup>

Thus, on the surface at least, relations seemed to have been quite amicable. The policy of each Secretary appears to have been one of basic non-intervention in the day-to-day affairs of the Commander in Chief, which may explain the apparent friendliness between them. In reality, the Secretary for War's role was basically that of a sanctioning and consulting authority in regard to the reserved duties of the Commander in Chief. Nevertheless, as Lord Panmure explained, the Secretary for War had "not only the right, but . . . [the] bounden duty to interfere" in cases of extreme conduct on the part of the Commander in Chief.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 566 and 568-69.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 349 and 364-65. <sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

Thus, there was some vagueness as to the relationship of the Secretary for War and the Commander in Chief. On the one hand, the Royal Patent defined the exceptions to the Secretary's powers reserved for the Commander in Chief. On the other hand, these exceptions were not really effective in view of the financial and political situation. The Secretary for War recognized these exceptions in theory but reserved the right to interfere in any aspects of Army administration when he felt it necessary. In practice, the Secretary for War rarely exercised this option in regard to discipline, except in cases of Parliamentary concern, and even then his actions usually took the form of consultation with, rather than orders to the Commander in Chief. Although civil authority was thus supreme in all aspects of Army administration, it was only applied peripherally to internal Army matters and the dual authority over the Army continued.

#### Armaments and Artillery Administration

Aside from the transfer of command from the Master General of Ordnance to the Commander in Chief in 1855, no major changes occurred in the organization of the Artillery, which was termed satisfactory and efficient in May, 1860, by Sidney Herbert, the Secretary for War.<sup>57</sup> However, several changes and innovations took place in the upper level adminis-

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 539.

tration regarding armaments.

Before the reorganization, the Director General of Artillery, subordinate to the Master General of Ordnance, was responsible for the armament of all fortresses. After the reorganization, Panmure retained the Director General as an adviser and as the person in charge of the armaments and material of fortresses. However, in May, 1859, when the post lay vacant, General Peel, the Secretary for War, abolished it and transferred its duties to the Commander in Chief. He felt that all aspects of artillery administration should be in the hands of the Commander in Chief who already had charge of the personnel and discipline of the Corps of Artillery, but not of the armaments and material in its keeping in the fortresses.<sup>58</sup>

The duties of the former Director General of Artillery were exercised under the Commander in Chief by the Deputy Adjutant General of Artillery and the Deputy Adjutant General of Engineers together with the Defense Committee. The Defense Committee consisted of military officers named by the Commander in Chief, with the Secretary for War's sanction, to assist him (the Commander in Chief) in performing the duties of the Director General of Artillery. The Defense Committee's major function was to offer professional advice through the Commander in Chief to the Secretary for War to assist the

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<sup>58</sup>Testimony of General Peel, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 327. See also the Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 149-50.



latter in making judgments regarding fortresses (including design) and their armaments. The Committee consisted of the Quartermaster-General, a naval officer, two artillery officers, two engineers, a secretary and the Commander in Chief.<sup>59</sup>

Before this change, fortress and armament plans had been submitted to the Commander in Chief, but since he was not a professional engineer, his opinion was not as valuable then as later when artillery and engineer officers assisted him. Consequently, the Duke of Cambridge felt that there was "a great deal more sifting [of plans and armaments] now than there ever was before, in consequence of these new arrangements." Also, by presiding over the Defense Committee, the Duke acknowledged that the Commander in Chief had a more extensive view of all military operations at home and abroad than had his predecessors.<sup>60</sup>

Notwithstanding these alterations, it should be pointed out that when the duties and responsibilities of the Director General of Artillery were transferred to the Commander in Chief, the only real change was that a different person now held responsibility for recommendations relating to armaments and materiel of fortresses. The same people

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<sup>59</sup>Testimony of the Duke of Cambridge, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 370. See also the testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 149-50.

<sup>60</sup>Testimony of the Duke of Cambridge, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 371. See also the testimony of Sidney Herbert, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 539.

who performed artillery duties before the transfer did so afterward. Moreover, all the armaments remained in the charge of the same artillery officers at their locations. These officers now reported through the Adjutant General to the Commander in Chief instead of directly to the Director General of Artillery as before.<sup>61</sup>

In addition to the Defense Committee, the Secretary for War had two other sources of advice on armaments--the Inspector General of Fortifications and the Ordnance Select Committee. The Ordnance Select Committee, created in 1859, received, reported on and experimented with all inventions or improvements submitted to the Secretary for War relating to arms of all natures and to gunpowder. The Committee was entirely independent of the manufacturing departments and of all parties interested in inventions themselves.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the Secretary for War had available to him two sources of advice

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<sup>61</sup>Testimony of General Peel, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 325 and 333.

<sup>62</sup>Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 141. The Ordnance Select Committee was made up of military men from the Royal Artillery, the Royal Engineers and the line exclusively employed in the conduct of the Committee's duties. (Testimony of General Burgoyne, the Inspector General of Fortifications, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 248). The Ordnance Select Committee replaced another committee with a similar function also called the Ordnance Select Committee. The former Ordnance Select Committee consisted of seventeen persons, both military and civilian. It was found inadequate because of its large size and because its members were all employed in positions (e.g., Superintendent of the Royal Laboratory) which made them intimately concerned with inventions and with the manufacturing departments. (Testimony of Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 140-41).

within the War Office itself, independent of the Horse Guards, to assist him in making decisions regarding armaments. This particular point is significant in that again we have an instance of organizational perpetuation of the dualism in Army administration. Although the War Office advisers were military men, they were independent of the Commander in Chief and acted as a counterbalance to him. Instead of one committee which consisted of the best professionals available and which could have dissected and presented all options to the Secretary for War, he had three separate channels of advice, two of them directly subordinate to him on the civil side of Army administration. Consequently, the Horse Guards' advice counterweighted that given to the Secretary for War by his own direct subordinates. Though not so crucial a factor in the dualism as others, it does point up the fact that even in the sphere of professional military advice, the Secretary for War found it useful to have his own independent advisers.

### Engineers

Before the reorganization of 1855, the Master General of Ordnance directed the training, discipline and works of the Royal Engineers. Immediately after the reorganization, the Inspector General of Fortifications commanded the Engineers until May, 1859, when command went to the Commander in Chief.

Previously, even though the Engineers were under the



discipline of the Inspector General of Fortifications, they received all their directions regarding discipline from the Horse Guards. They also acted according to Horse Guards' regulations in every respect regarding military organization and arrangements, even though the Engineers were raised for civil duties (works, surveys, etc.) and were not trained specifically as soldiers. Furthermore, in a campaign, the Engineers had come under the General Officer Commanding, not the War Office. Thus, the Engineers had not been completely divorced from the Horse Guards in the past and their new relationship did not amount to a great change, at least in terms of discipline.<sup>63</sup>

Even though the Inspector General lost the command of the Engineers, he did remain the Secretary at War's adviser on fortifications. The main reason that the entire office of the Inspector General of Fortifications was not transferred to the Horse Guards was because of Treasury objections to this change. The Treasury desired the Secretary for War to retain in his office the means both of originating proposals for the construction of works and for checking such proposals which might reach him from the Commander in Chief. As the Secretary for War was responsible for presenting such proposals to Parliament, the Treasury felt that he should pos-

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<sup>63</sup>Testimony of General Burgoyne, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 241, 244 and 246.

sess the means of determining for himself the fitness of them as objects for the expenditure of public money. General Peel assented to this and the Inspector General of Fortifications remained in the War Office.<sup>64</sup>

One modification brought about by the transfer of command was in the method of communication between the Inspector General of Fortifications and the Commander in Chief. When the Inspector General also commanded the Engineers, he communicated directly with the Commander in Chief. However, after the transfer, he was completely subordinated to the Secretary for War, through whom he now communicated with the Commander in Chief.<sup>65</sup> Thus the Commander in Chief lost the benefit of the Inspector General's wide-ranging experience and expertise.

The most controversial change brought by the transfer of command involved the method of appointment and assignment of Corps of Engineers officers. Before the transfer, the Inspector General of Fortifications was responsible for the assignment, employment, instruction, discipline and organization of Engineer officers. After the transfer, this responsibility of course passed to the Commander in Chief.

The major point of contention among Engineer officers

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<sup>64</sup>Testimony of General Peel, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 328-29.

<sup>65</sup>Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 158-59.

after the transfer was over the method of selection of their members for specific duties. The Horse Guards used a roster system. In other words, selection was by turns and not necessarily by ability, specialty or capability, which had formerly been the criteria for selection. Burgoyne objected, as he felt that a more capable officer for a specific task might be bypassed in favor of a less capable one with resulting confusion and inefficiency.<sup>66</sup> The Duke of Cambridge defended the roster system by referring to it as a hedge against favoritism. He stated that he did not want the same officers always to get the lucrative assignments while others got the less agreeable ones; departure from the roster system should be the exception, not the rule. Furthermore, the Duke of Cambridge noted that assignments were referred to the Secretary for War and through him presumably to the Inspector General of Fortifications before they became final. The ultimate decision in any case came from the Secretary for War.<sup>67</sup>

The transfer of command to the Commander in Chief had a very deleterious effect on the morale of the Corps of Engineers, as the ultimate effect of the new arrangement placed it under two masters. The Commander in Chief regulated Engineer appointments, promotions and discipline but in the area of civil works, their main function, they were responsible

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<sup>66</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 242 and 247.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 376-77.



to the Secretary for War and indirectly through him to their former boss, the Inspector General of Fortifications. The resulting dichotomy in the administration of the Engineers created not only a dualism in the administration of the Army as a whole but also in one of its military branches as well, leaving Engineer officers confused, divided and demoralized. This situation was illustrated by a statement in July, 1859, by General Burgoyne in which he reported that he had received "letters upon letters of condolence and regret on the part of officers in the Engineers, that this change has been made." The esprit de corps of the old Corps of Engineers gave way to disharmony, especially in relations with the Horse Guards and its roster system.<sup>68</sup>

### Clothing

Up to June, 1854, the clothing of the Infantry and Cavalry was supplied to each regiment by a clothier chosen by the Colonel of the regiment, who paid for it out of a sum allowed to him for that purpose. This method offered great opportunities for individual abuse and financial benefit. Consequently, a Royal Warrant signed in June, 1854, provided that the Colonels would henceforth receive a fixed annual allowance instead of "deriving any pecuniary emolument as theretofore." It directed that the Colonels still provide

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., pp. 242 (Burgoyne), 534 (Herbert) and 83 (Panmure).

clothing and accoutrements, with the public paying only the cost price of the articles under regulations determined by the Secretary at War. In June, 1855, the Colonels lost their right to provide uniforms, which went to a new entity, the Director General of Clothing. The Queen still determined the patterns, through the Commander in Chief, and the public now managed engagements already entered into by the Colonels. For the future, the Government would purchase clothing after open competition among prospective contractors.<sup>69</sup>

A hitch soon developed, however. Different contractors were hired to provide different materials which often resulted in a delay in getting the clothing to the troops. For example, buttons might be contracted from one person, cloth from another and tape from a third. If delivery of buttons was late, coats often went to regiments without them. General Peel altered this system so that the War Office reverted back to the 'old system' of contracting with one person for the entire article of clothing. He stated that soon afterwards complaints diminished greatly and the quality of clothing improved.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the State of the Store and Clothing Depots at Weedon, Woolwich, and the Tower, etc. (1859 [session 2], Vol. IX, p. 285), pp. 289-90. Hereinafter referred to as 1859 Store and Clothing. In February, 1857, the Stores and Clothing Departments were merged in order to simplify matters and avoid repetitious procedures.

<sup>70</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 343.

The clothing of the Artillery and the Engineers was supplied in a different manner. Before 1856, it was furnished entirely by contractors who supplied a portion of the clothing made up (tailored) and a portion cut out but not made up. Troops overseas received the made up clothing while those at home got the cut out clothing which military tailors finished. In May, 1856, a new system was adopted. After prior contracts had expired, an establishment was formed at Woolwich Arsenal (the headquarters for the Artillery and Engineers) for the purpose of making up the clothing for both branches. Cloth and all other required materials were procured by contract and delivered there for assembly.<sup>71</sup>

Unquestionably, the overall quality of all clothing improved after these reforms. Not only Peel but also Lord Panmure commented on this improvement as did a Parliamentary Committee which, in 1859, reported on the clothing establishment. The Committee found that the cloth used in artillery and engineer clothing was "very much better" than that of pre-1856, and that the clothing cost "considerably less" than that supplied by contractors under the old, pre-1856 system.<sup>72</sup> The Committee also found that the quality of infantry and cavalry clothing was much better albeit more expensive. Nevertheless, the Committee believed this increased quality and the

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<sup>71</sup>1859 Store and Clothing, p. 312.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 309. See also the testimony of Lord Panmure, 1860 Report on Military Organizations, p. 96.



opportunity for open competition for contracts outweighed the added cost.<sup>73</sup>

In terms of quality, the new system was thus clearly superior to the former one. In terms of efficiency, it was no worse than its predecessor. In terms of economy, it appears that the new system remained within tolerable bounds.<sup>74</sup>

### Armaments Manufacture

At the beginning of the Crimean War, manufacturing at the government facilities at Woolwich Arsenal was on a small scale, which resulted in a considerable deficiency of ordnance stores. A great deal of what was available, furthermore, dated back to the time of the Napoleonic Wars. Much of the difficulty owed to the lack of suitable machinery at Woolwich to enable the Arsenal to keep up with demand. This lack, along with the exorbitant demands made by private manufacturers and the rapid drain of stores, led the government to create, in Panmure's words, "a vast establishment of

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<sup>73</sup>1859 Store and Clothing, p. 309. Both General Peel and Lord Panmure contradicted the Committee's findings by testifying that the cost of the new system approximated that of the former one. Although statistics are not available to support either contention, it can be surmised that the cost of the new system must have approximated or just barely exceeded the cost of the old system, since no complaints were raised regarding it. Furthermore, Peel stated that he had seen comparisons and, when the increased cost of raw materials was added, the two costs were "very nearly the same thing." (1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 96 and 343).

<sup>74</sup>In regard to efficiency, Lord Panmure stated that deliveries of clothing were as punctual under the new system as under the old one. (1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 96).

very complex and valuable machinery" on an extensive scale at Woolwich. Machines procured from the United States and from countries on the Continent enabled a powerful factory of munitions to emerge.<sup>75</sup>

By 1859, there were three major manufacturing departments at Woolwich--the Gun Carriage Department, the Laboratory and the Gun Factory--along with two other important departments, the Chemical Department and the Stores Department.<sup>76</sup> There were two other branches as well: one at Enfield, for the production of small arms, and the other at Waltham Abbey, for the manufacture of gunpowder.

The Carriage Department, the largest department at Woolwich, manufactured carriages, platforms, slides and mortar beds for both land and sea service. The Laboratory produced munitions, rockets and shells and the Gun Factory manufactured Armstrong (rifled) guns and forged muzzle loading guns. The Stores Department, under the supervision of the Director of Stores and Clothing at the War Office, provided ordnance stores and all military stores except small arms, camp equipment and barrack stores to land and sea forces and to defenses at home and abroad. The Chemical Department reported on all inventions and proposals and questions of a chemical, generally scientific

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<sup>75</sup>1860 Report on Military Organizations, pp. 175 (Hawes) and 87-89 (Panmure). See also, Andrew Wynter, "Woolwich Arsenal and its Manufacturing Establishments," London Quarterly Review, January, 1858, p. 122.

<sup>76</sup>The Stores Department at Woolwich should not be confused with the Stores and Clothing Department at the War Office, a distinct entity altogether.



nature (e.g., analysis of bread) supplied to the Army.<sup>77</sup>

All authorizations for manufacture emanated from the Stores and Clothing Department at the War Office, passed to the Stores Department at Woolwich, and then to the appropriate manufacturing department(s) for action. A completed item went to the Stores Department which issued it to the field according to the instructions of the War Office. Thus, the Stores Department was actually the pivotal entity at Woolwich around which the other departments operated.<sup>78</sup>

Despite the importance of the Woolwich establishment, there was no one superintendent present there to oversee operations. Lord Panmure defended this arrangement since he believed a superintendent would probably interfere continually in the work of the departments; more differences might arise between the superintendent and the department heads than among the department heads themselves.<sup>79</sup> Consequently, in matters of a financial nature, the department heads at Woolwich looked to the Permanent Under Secretary of State, Sir Benjamin

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<sup>77</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 481 (Colonel Alexander Thomas Tulloh, Head, Carriage Department), 577 (Herbert), 178 (Hawes) and 429 (Captain Henry William Gordon, Principal Military Storekeeper, Woolwich). Also, Wynter, "Woolwich Arsenal," p. 124 and 1859 Store and Clothing, p. 313. Another distinct entity responsible for stores was located at the Tower of London. Under the Director of Stores and Clothing at the War Office, it provided accoutrements, camp equipment, barrack bedding, furniture, utensils, tools of all descriptions and small arms. (1859 Store and Clothing, pp. 319 and 321).

<sup>78</sup> Testimony of Gordon, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 429 and 432 and 1859 Store and Clothing, pp. 313-14.

<sup>79</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 91.



Hawes. Sir Benjamin corresponded with each of them on financial matters and held weekly meetings in his office to discuss financial items, but this was as far as his supervisory authority went. He exercised no discretion whatsoever over technical matters, which were determined by consultation between the departments and the Secretary for War through the Stores and Clothing Department and/or the Ordnance Select Committee.<sup>80</sup>

The purpose of the augmentation of the establishment at Woolwich had been to obtain a "good and cheap supply of a high standard as to quality."<sup>81</sup> In this purpose, the establishment succeeded. Sir Benjamin Hawes felt that the results of the change in terms of the supply of stores to the Army in the second year of the Crimean War and during the Indian mutiny were satisfactory. The greatly increased power of production had eliminated the danger of running short of armaments and munitions.<sup>82</sup>

Hawes also stated that the new arrangement saved a considerable amount of money. He supported his contention

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<sup>80</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 183 (Godley), 536 and 540 (Herbert), 486 and 494 (John Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of the Royal Gun Factory, Woolwich) and 440 (Major Edward M. Boxer, Head, Royal Laboratory, Woolwich).

<sup>81</sup> Statement by Mr. Monsell, a member of the Committee, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 175.

<sup>82</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 175.

with figures indicating a saving of nearly £200,000 in 1859-60 for the casting of a specified amount of shot and shells at Woolwich over the cost paid to contractors in 1855 for identical work. Major Boxer, the Head of the Laboratory at Woolwich, confirmed Hawes' figures and indicated that although quality did not improve (it had always been good), the Laboratory could produce any number of shell and shot at any given moment. In itself, this ability to quickly produce ammunition was a vast improvement over past capabilities.<sup>83</sup>

Praise for the new system also came from the Assistant Under Secretary of State, J.R. Godley, and from Sidney Herbert. Herbert felt that the establishment, now eminently satisfactory, had made up the arrears in guns and ammunition caused by the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. Praise for the new system came in its early stages from no less a figure than Lord Palmerston, the Prime Minister. In a letter to Panmure after a visit to Woolwich in September, 1855, the Prime Minister observed: "The state of the establishment does great credit to your administration. You have some remarkably intelligent men at the head of departments, and there is throughout a spirit of activity and progress which is very gratifying to me."<sup>84</sup>

Notwithstanding this success, deficiencies remained.

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<sup>83</sup>Ibid., pp. 177 and 444-45.

<sup>84</sup>Douglas and Ramsay, eds., Panmure Papers, II, p. 487. Also, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 184 (Godley) and 538 (Herbert).

The most important was the lack of on-the-spot supervision by an overall commander/superintendent. Although the system seemed to function well, the Government placed a great deal of trust in the individual department heads at Woolwich to perform efficiently and properly. In fact, the War Office did not even officially delegate an artillery officer or anyone else to inspect the Gun Factory or the distribution of its products. Military and civil authorities often visited unofficially to (in the words of John Anderson, the Assistant Superintendent of the Gun Factory) "see how we were getting on," but neither Sir Benjamin Hawes nor the Director General of Stores and Clothing, Captain Caffin, the two points of contact between Woolwich and the War Office, visited the establishment with any regularity.<sup>85</sup> This then was a potentially ticklish situation--if the department heads lacked integrity or ability, possible abuse or, at worst, disaster, might ensue.

This lack of overall supervision is especially surprising in light of events at the clothing depot at Weedon. Although it was located some distance from London, Panmure had established the depot at Weedon in November, 1855, in order to take advantage of existing buildings there. James Sutton Elliot, a man of thirty five years' experience working under the Board of Ordnance, took charge of the depot in

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<sup>85</sup>Testimony of John Anderson, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 492-93.



December, 1855, and remained there until May, 1858, after which he fled to America. His successor subsequently found the depot's books to be in arrears. It became necessary for an outside accounting firm to examine them, which took eight months. The firm concluded that Elliot was guilty of laxity and irregularity in his bookkeeping, but not of fraudulent practices or of cheating the government. Furthermore, it discovered no pecuniary loss in consequence of Elliot's mismanagement of accounts.<sup>86</sup>

A Parliamentary Committee subsequently found in 1859 that the fault for the unsatisfactory conduct of business at the depot lay with the War Office, mainly because of a lack of supervision. The Committee felt that the depot was located too far from London for the immediate and personal surveillance of the Director General of Stores and Clothing, Captain Caffin, who had visited Weedon only once, in April, 1857, and then had directed his attention only to the system of inspection of goods to the neglect of the books. General Peel eventually rectified this mistake during his tenure as Secretary for War by moving the depot to Pimlico where more rigid supervision from London could be exercised.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>1859 Store and Clothing, pp. 290-94 and 298.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., pp. 300 and 306-07.

## The Accountant General's Office

The Accountant General's Office, first constituted in 1855, combined under one head the duties formerly discharged by the Examiner of Accounts and the bookkeeping branch at the War Office with that portion of the duties of the Surveyor General of Ordnance which consisted of the examination of claims and audit of accounts of the Ordnance Corps and of the other establishments under the Board of Ordnance. The Accountant General thus superintended the whole of the accounting department including bookkeeping, examining and payment functions.<sup>88</sup>

War Office personnel and members of a Parliamentary Committee which investigated the Accountant General's Office found the overall performance of the new department satisfactory.<sup>89</sup> Two major controversies, however, soon surfaced. The first concerned the preparation of the Army Estimates and the second concerned an operational assistant Accountant General.

Before the amalgamation of the War Office and the

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<sup>88</sup>Testimony of George Arbuthnot, a Treasury employee and a member of a Parliamentary Committee which looked into the Accountant General's branch of the War Office, and Richard Charles Kirby, the Accountant General, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 396 and 412. See also 1864 War Office, p. 331. Arbuthnot's Committee presented its report in April, 1859.

<sup>89</sup>Testimony of Sir Benjamin Hawes, Arbuthnot, and William George Anderson, a principle clerk of the finance branch of the Treasury and a member of the Parliamentary Committee along with Arbuthnot, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 226 and 405.

Board of Ordnance, the expenditures of the War Office were confined mostly to pay and allowances, which made the preparation of the Estimates comparatively simple. On the other hand, Ordnance Department expenditures covered a wide range of activities, rendering accounting procedures and Estimates more complicated. In the War Office, a department separate from accounting prepared the Estimates, while in the Ordnance Department, the account branch prepared the Estimates. Unfortunately, when the consolidation occurred, the old War Office method was adopted for the reorganized War Office. Consequently, a clerk under the direction of the Secretary for War not connected with the Accountant General's Department prepared the Estimates. His was a critical job, for the Estimates were the foundations of expenditure, for which the Accountant General was responsible, and the record of that expenditure formed the material for the annual accounts presented by the War Office to Parliament.<sup>90</sup>

Unfortunately, under the new arrangement, the clerks who recorded expenditures in the Accountant General's Department were not necessarily acquainted with the classifications established in the Estimates and were thus prone to error. For example, when William Anderson inspected the Accountant General's Department, he found seven pages of entries that had to be corrected because the classifications did not conform to

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<sup>90</sup>Testimony of Arbuthnot, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 390-91 and 398.



those in the Estimates. Conversely, those people who prepared the Estimates were not familiar with accounting classifications. The result was not unlike the confusion among accounting clerks over the Estimates. As George Arbuthnot stated,

all those intricate questions of expenditure which would arise from works, stores and so on, very much complicated the system of accounts, and it has been found, in practice, that the clerk who prepares the estimates, not having a knowledge of the details of the expenditure, frequently so classifies the details of the estimates that it misleads those who have direction of the expenditure.<sup>91</sup>

Logically, the person who prepared the Estimates should also have entered expenditures in accounts, a point Parliament and the Army soon realized. Thus, in 1860, as the result of a recommendation by Arbuthnot's Committee, the Secretary for War, Sidney Herbert, set in motion such a change. Thereafter, the Accountant General framed the Estimates in addition to his other duties.<sup>92</sup>

The second major controversy involved the position of Assistant Accountant General. Formerly, in the War Office, one person, the Chief Examiner, had conducted the examination

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 391 and testimony of William Anderson, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 391. For example, if bayonets were polished, they were considered in the accounts as arms. If they were not polished, they came under the head of miscellaneous stores. (1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 394).

<sup>92</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 582 (Herbert) and 393 (Arbuthnot). The change was made official by a War Office memorandum dated 24 June 1862. (1870 Report on the Army Departments, pp. 394-95).

of accounts. Under the new organization, this work was undertaken by the Assistant Accountant General who replaced, in great measure, the former Chief Examiner. The Assistant Accountant General performed no other functions for the Accountant General.<sup>93</sup> Thus, even though the position of Chief Examiner no longer existed, in reality it continued with only a change in its designation.

Parliament grew concerned over this situation, because there seemed to be too much business in the department to be effectively superintended by one person (the Accountant General) without a general assistant.<sup>94</sup> Several alternatives were proposed, including an increase in duties for the assistant but, as of 1860, the situation remained the same.

In conclusion, both major problems involved carry-overs from the previous organization. In one case, the situation was resolved by substituting one method for another. In the other case, an expansion of duties was proposed in order to satisfy Parliamentary concern over a possible lack of supervision in a crucial department. The problems then did not concern new positions and procedures, but the reconciliation of former positions and procedures in view of the re-organization.

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<sup>93</sup>Testimony of William Anderson, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 399.

<sup>94</sup>Testimony of Arbuthnot, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 399.

### Commissariat

The much maligned Commissariat, unfortunately, after the reorganization remained as much a center of dispute as before because of indecision as to its financial functions and insufficient field organization.

To reiterate, the Commissariat was transferred in its entirety from the Treasury to the War Department in December, 1854. Its duties consisted of supplying food, fuel and light to the Army at home and abroad and of examining store accounts, returns and contracts dealing with commissariat supplies.<sup>95</sup> It also entered into all local contracts overseas for supplies, so that only one department would bid for contracts, avoiding the possibility of competitive bidding between departments. Each department abroad went through the Commissariat to obtain items not in stock or available otherwise, and, with the permission of the General Officer in Command at the particular location, the Commissariat contracted for the items. The transaction was actually only a paper one, however, as the Commissariat had nothing to do with the issue, receipt or inspection of goods.<sup>96</sup> Finally, the financial business of the

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<sup>95</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 79 and 102 (Panmure) and 297 (John William Smith, the Commissary General). Note that the so-called Quartermaster General's stores (i.e., camping equipment--tents, clothing, mining/entrenching tools--blankets, boots, etc.) were entirely distinct from, and managed separately from, commissariat supplies. (Testimony of Smith, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 278-79).

<sup>96</sup> Testimony of Admiral J.C. Caffin, Director General of Stores, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 402. and testimony of Hawes, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 216.



War Office overseas rested entirely with the Commissariat, though domestically the management of financial matters fell to the Accountant General.<sup>97</sup>

In reality, the financial business of the Commissariat was never completely divorced from the Treasury. As Lord Panmure stated: "such is the complicated nature of the Commissariat, that the Treasury had transactions with the Commissariat . . . in all parts of the world. And have still."<sup>98</sup> In fact, as explained by William T. Power, the Commissary General in 1864, Commissariat officers actually served as overseas agents for the Treasury in that they raised, through the Treasury, all money for the Army and Navy overseas, made monetary advances for every service overseas, and purchased and paid for all supplies and materials obtained on the spot overseas for all branches of the Army. Commissariat officers were, in the words of Power, "in fact, the bankers of the army and the agents of the Treasury and of the War Department abroad."<sup>99</sup>

Lord Panmure therefore soon became convinced of the inexpediency of the transfer of the financial business of the

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<sup>97</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 297 (Smith) and 412 (Richard Charles Kirby, the Accountant General).

<sup>98</sup> 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 79.

<sup>99</sup> 1867 Report on Supply, Appendix VI, p. 625. Power's 1864 testimony was included in this Committee's report as an appendix.

Commissariat to the War Office from the Treasury. He felt it an unnecessary and inconvenient burden on himself, the War Office and the Commissariat. This feeling, along with Treasury objections to the transfer, led Panmure to arrange for the financial business to be retransferred back to the Treasury in early 1856.<sup>100</sup>

By the terms of the retransfer, the Treasury took back the management and the correspondence attendant upon all financial matters. However, it did not appoint its own officers to supervise financial operations but continued to employ Commissariat officers for that purpose because Commissariat officers were the only trained people available.<sup>101</sup> Testifying before a Parliamentary Committee in 1864, Power explained that the Treasury was

determined to retain the commissariat officers in the service, expressing at the same time their satisfaction with the manner in which they had always discharged their trust, and their confidence in their capacity and integrity. To this day the duty continues to be performed by the commissariat, accounting direct to the Treasury, without any reference to the Secretary of State for War for this important service.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 79-80. The Treasury had objected on the grounds that the transfer of financial business to the War Office included large transactions with the colonies and other miscellaneous business with which the War Office had nothing to do. (Testimony of William Anderson, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 410-11).

<sup>101</sup>1864 War Office, p. 334. See also the testimony of Lord Panmure, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 80.

<sup>102</sup>1867 Report on Supply, Appendix VI, p. 630.

Therefore, officers of supply remained officers of finance at the same time even though the primary duty of the Commissariat was to provide food, fuel and light for the Army.

This situation presented an enormous difficulty to Commissariat officers as they attempted to reconcile the conflicting demands made upon them in the field in their roles of finance and supply. During both the New Zealand and China expeditions of the late 1850s and early 1860s, financial difficulties arose because the principal Commissariat officers, required to attend to supply duties, could not give personal attention to the enforcement of financial regulations. To add to their difficulties, these Commissariat officers often found themselves serving under four masters: the Treasury, the Secretary for War (through the Accountant General) for military payments and accounts, the Commissary General and the military officer in command of their respective unit or installation.<sup>103</sup> In the words of Power:

There can be no doubt that for [Commissariat officers] . . . there are too many responsibilities, too many accounts, and too many masters. It is quite impossible that they can give their whole or even the necessary attention to all of these matters in times of great pressure.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> 1864 War Office, pp. 333-34 and John Bowle, The Imperial Achievement: The Rise and Transformation of the British Empire (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), pp. 271 and 278-79.

<sup>104</sup> 1867 Report on Supply, Appendix VI, p. 630. The problem of a heavy workload for Commissariat officers was illustrated by events during the Crimean War. At that time, the Commissary General in the Crimea had become overburdened with work and even with "a great deal of assistance," he had been unable to carry out properly the double duty of supplying



The Commissariat's problems did not end there however. Commissariat officers were civilians and, as such, were subject to much criticism and ridicule from Army personnel in the field. William H. Drake, the Commissary General in 1866, dealt with this subject in testimony before a Parliamentary Committee. He referred to it as an "inherent weakness in any department to be entirely civil, and not to have a cordial co-operation with all other departments."<sup>105</sup>

Furthermore, Commissariat officers were often forced to perform in the field without an adequate number of subordinates, thus increasing their workload and intensifying the pressure upon them. In view of this problem, a committee appointed by the Secretary for War in 1858 to inquire into the Commissariat and its efficiency found "a feeling of great depression and discouragement" in the department caused by "the want of consideration in which they are held . . . and of the helplessness and embarrassment in which they invariably find themselves placed, when troops are ordered to the field, from the absence of subordinate assistance." The committee concluded that the Commissariat "cannot be considered at this moment as in any respect in a more satisfactory condition for

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the Army and raising funds to support it. He therefore had of necessity delegated the latter function to a subordinate officer at Constantinople. (Testimony of Sir John M'Neill, the head of the Commission of Inquiry into the Supplies of the British Army in the Crimea, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 307 and 309).

<sup>105</sup> 1867 Report on Supply, p. 506. See also the testimony of M'Neill, 1860 Report on Military Organization, pp. 308-09.

field service than it was found to be at the outbreak of the last war."<sup>106</sup>

The result of the committee's report was a Royal Warrant issued in October, 1858, which gave a military character to the Commissariat. The Warrant specified that all first appointments in the Commissariat were to be made from among commissioned officers of the Army, specifically subalterns, who volunteered and who were recommended by their commanders. At the end of a probationary period, if the officers proved competent, they would receive commissions in the Commissariat as Deputy Assistant Commissary Generals. The Warrant also specified a table of equivalent ranks of Commissariat and Army officers and it authorized the Commissariat to draw subordinates (i.e., clerks, storekeepers, butchers, bakers, etc.) from among Army personnel on a permanent basis if necessary. These individuals would be completely withdrawn from their regiments after a probationary period and placed under Commissariat officers for discipline.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Existing Organization of the Commissariat Department (1859, Vol. XV, p. 187), p. 192. Hereinafter referred to as 1859 Commissariat Department. The Committee's report was submitted on July 27, 1858. See also the testimony of Commissary General Smith, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 269, which addresses the issue of a lack of subordinates.

<sup>107</sup> 1859 Commissary Department, pp. 189-90.

The Commissariat was thus subject to much confusion and turmoil in the years following the Crimean War. Even though it became more military in character, in 1860 the results had hardly begun to show as the scheme had not had sufficient time to develop. The Commissariat thus remained in a questionable state of efficiency. However, this is not to say that the reorganization did not have at least some positive effect on the Commissariat. Especially encouraging was the move to correct one of the major difficulties encountered in the Crimean War--the inability of soldiers to help themselves in the supply of food. Under a new arrangement after the reorganization, commissariat corps were established at the several military camps in the United Kingdom resulting in the creation of a body of trained men accustomed to slaughter, bake and distribute food for a large force.<sup>108</sup>

### Conclusion

The War Office of 1860 differed substantially from the one of 1854. Much larger, it had also assumed much more responsibility and had moved to a different location. Instead of being one of several agencies administering the Army, it was now the only one. The Secretary for War had replaced the various persons controlling the Army and representing the Army's interest in Parliament.

The Army itself was unified under the Commander in

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<sup>108</sup>Testimony of Smith, 1860 Report on Military Organization, p. 270.



Chief instead of being fragmented as before. Of the two major events which had brought this about, one, the transfer of the command of the Artillery to the Commander in Chief, had worked well. However, the other major event, the transfer of the command of the Engineers to the Commander in Chief, had not worked well as it had placed the Engineers under two masters which (along with other factors) resulted in the demoralization of the corps.

Clothing was of a better quality and the government was realizing a saving by manufacturing its own arms at Woolwich and elsewhere. Furthermore, by producing arms and munitions at a much greater rate than before, the government had effectively diminished its chances of being caught again with a deficiency in armaments in case of war.

Finally, a much greater degree of unification of the administrative elements of the Army now existed, though the Horse Guards and, to a much lesser degree, the Medical Department, still acted somewhat independently.

Unfortunately, the reorganization failed to solve several past deficiencies and even created several new problems. The most obvious past deficiency it failed to correct was the dualism between the civil and military authorities in the administration of the Army. In fact, the reorganization emphasized and even perpetuated this dualism by maintaining separate locations for the Commander in Chief and the War Office, which accentuated the distinctness between

the two authorities. So, too, did the system of formal correspondence between the two and the appointment at the War Office of a special position, the Secretary for Military Correspondence, to deal with the Horse Guards. The failure of the administration to define precisely the relative positions of the Secretary for War and the Commander in Chief only enhanced this separation.

Another past deficiency not solved was that of the Commissariat, which remained in a state of flux and confusion. However, by giving the Commissariat a more military character, the War Office laid the groundwork for improvement and increased efficiency.

Much of what was done in the early stages of the reorganization was done in a hasty fashion and under tremendous pressure. Problems resulted and mistakes were made because of a lack of foresight by the reorganizers. Prime examples were the transfer and subsequent retransfer of the financial business of the Commissariat, the confusion in accounting procedures and Estimates framing, the complexity of the minuting and correspondence system and the use first of multiple, then of single contractors for clothing. Furthermore, the reorganization did not provide for an on-the-spot supervisor of the crucial manufacturing establishment at Woolwich.

In short, the reorganization was not the final answer

in the search for Army efficiency and unity of administration but it was a definite improvement over the past and was a step in the right direction toward the ultimate goal.



## C H A P T E R   I V

### CONFUSION AND CHANGE, 1861-1868

As a result of continuing problems in War Office administration despite the wave of post-Crimean War reforms, the organization of the War Office underwent numerous changes during the period 1861-1868. The general pattern of change was haphazard at best and reflected the uncertainty of War Office administrators concerning organizational direction and the lack of a concrete plan for further improvement of War Office efficiency.<sup>1</sup> It also reflected the waning of public fervor following the initial phases of the Crimean War, so that once again, the military and its reform became low priority items in the public and parliamentary mind.<sup>2</sup>

The major concern in this period revolved around logistics and ordnance--two major problem areas in the Crimean War which continued to be a thorn in the side of War Office administrators long after the reorganization.

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<sup>1</sup>During the twelve year period following the reorganization of 1855, there were seventeen Royal Commissions, eighteen select committees of the House of Commons, nineteen committees of officers within the War Office and thirty-five committees of military officers which investigated several aspects of War Office and Horse Guards operations and organization in an attempt to identify and eliminate sources of confusion, ambiguity and inefficiency. (Fortescue, British Army, XIII, p. 555). See Appendix D for a graphic depiction of War Office organization as of 1867, along with a brief list of duties for major departments.

<sup>2</sup>Bond, Staff College, pp. 82-83.

Interestingly enough, the situation in the area of civil-military relations in 1868 was basically the same as in 1860. In fact, only one concrete attempt was made to define further the duties of the Commander in Chief vis-à-vis the Secretary for War. This occurred in March, 1869, in answer to a question in the House of Commons relating to documents "now in force" upon the subject of the respective duties and authority of the Secretary for War and the Commander in Chief. The Government responded with the publication of a document dated 11 October 1861, issued "By Her Majesty's Command." It stated,

Whereas We deem it expedient, in order to prevent any doubts as to the powers and duties of the Commander in Chief with respect to the Government of Our Army and the Administration of Military Affairs, to express Our Will and Pleasure thereon. Now Our Will and Pleasure is, that the Military Command and Discipline of Our Army and Land Forces, as likewise the Appointments to and Promotions in the same, together with all powers relating to the Military Command and Discipline of Our Army, which, under and by any Patent or Commission from Us, shall have been, or shall from time to time be, committed, to, vested in, or regulated by the Commander in Chief of Our Forces, or the General Commanding Our Forces in Chief for the time being, shall be excepted from the Department of the Secretary of State for War.

And We are further pleased to declare Our Will and Pleasure to be, that all powers relating to the matters above enumerated shall be exercised, and all business relating thereto shall be transacted by the Commander in Chief of Our Forces for the time being, and shall be deemed to belong to his Office, subject always to Our General Control over the Government of the Army, and to the responsibility of the Secretary of State for the exercise of Our Royal Prerogative in that behalf, and subject to any powers formerly exercised by the Secretary at

War.<sup>3</sup>

This statement certainly did nothing to clear up the vagueness relating to the respective duties and authority of the Commander in Chief and the Secretary for War. It only served to perpetuate the previous situation.

However, both military and civilian administrators voiced concern over the segregation of the Horse Guards from the War Office. A Parliamentary Committee appointed to inquire into the conduct of business in the War Office concluded in 1870 that the military administration of England was organized upon a system of want of trust. The result was the creation of a

double establishment for the transaction of the same business . . . and both within the walls of the War Office itself, and more especially between the War Office and the Horse Guards, the habit is still to prefer a system of unnecessary check, double labour, and divided responsibility, to one of well-defined responsibility, simplicity, and reasonable confidence.<sup>4</sup>

The military themselves even realized the efficacy of the combination of military and civil authorities in the same building. Lieutenant General Lord William Paulet, the Adjutant General, testified before the Committee that the conduct of business between the War Office and the Horse Guards would indeed be facilitated and time saved by bringing both under

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<sup>3</sup> Copy of any Documents now in force upon the subject of the respective Duties and Authority of the Secretary of State for War and the Commander in Chief (1868-69, Vol XXXVI, p. 591), p. 591.

<sup>4</sup> 1870 Report on the Army Departments, pp. 359-60.



one roof, but he felt that the military and civil authorities should be kept distinct. When asked why, he replied: "They always have been distinct. In fact, I have never given the question much of a thought."<sup>5</sup> The Duke of Cambridge also felt that the transaction of business between the two branches would be facilitated "very considerably" by their consolidation. However, he qualified this opinion by stating that he thought it would be "very desirable to arrange that the Military Command should be on one side of the present Horse Guards, whilst the Secretary of State's Office, with the Financial Departments, should be on the other, with a general communication connecting the two offices, each having a separate entrance."<sup>6</sup>

The Horse Guards thus saw the need for improved efficiency in the conduct of their business with the War Office and accepted the premise that consolidation under one roof was the best answer. However, they remained conservative in their outlook toward the civilian element, and they were not ready to sacrifice their relative independence and their share of authority over the Army.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 405.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 463.

<sup>7</sup>The most obvious personification of military conservatism in the mid to late nineteenth century was, of course, the Duke of Cambridge. The Duke was of the 'old school' and, backed by the Queen, represented that viewpoint in his dealings with civilian authorities. However, as Hamer points out, the Duke should not be characterized "as an unbending conservative opposed to the changing times, but as representative of the officers of the army which he had been chosen to command." (Hamer,

The field of logistics, however, was not as static in that two major changes occurred. The first took place in 1863 when the clothing business was separated from the Stores Department and became, once again, a distinct department under the Director of Clothing. The more significant change came in 1868 with the creation of the Control Department. This was the direct result of the recommendation of a Parliamentary Committee, chaired by Lord Strathnairn, which in 1866 had investigated Army transport and supply.

Lord Strathnairn's Committee recommended specifically the organization of a department to control the working of all departments of supply and transport.<sup>8</sup> The Secretary for War, Sir John Somerset Pakington, adopted the recommendation in full and, in 1868, the Control Department was organized. It consisted of the former Commissariat, Purveyors, Contract, Clothing, Barrack and Military Store Departments.<sup>9</sup> The basic

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Civil-Military Relations, p. 14. See also Giles St. Aubyn, The Royal George, 1819-1904: The Life of H.R.H. Prince George Duke of Cambridge [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964], pp. 121-22). Within the Army itself, a split developed between traditionalists (conservatives) and reformers (progressives), led by Sir Garnet Wolseley. While both sides agreed that the Army as a profession had to be protected from unnecessary civilian interference, they disagreed over such issues as regimental reorganization, education, training, staff planning and purchase. This conflict, which falls beyond the scope of this inquiry, was important in that, according to Hamer, it reflected "fairly accurately the cross-currents and conflicting influences of the late Victorian era that were transforming the old British army into the new." (Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, pp. x and 18). For further reading on this conflict and its impact, see Hamer, *Ibid.*, pp. 13-30.

<sup>8</sup>1867 Report on Supply, p. 354.

<sup>9</sup>Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, p. 13. General supervision

change, though, was merely in the chain of command. The duties of the departments as they then existed (i.e., regulations, forms of account and method of conducting business) continued in force "precisely as at present."<sup>10</sup>

The following excerpt from the Committee's report explains its rationale for recommending such a change:

The necessity [ for the administrative reorganization of supply] is more imperative than formerly, that dependence should not be placed upon exceptional talent, or upon lavish expenditure to provide, at the moment of action, all that may have been omitted during peace in our administrative organization. The Committee are not unaware of, and do not desire to underrate the changes, the improvements in details, and the extension of the Administrative Departments which have been made in late years, and which have provided large administrative resources, but they find they are unconnected by any common system of organization or direction, such as should combine their action and turn them to the best account. The abundant material and the division of labour which thus already exist in the separate Departments, afford means and opportunity for providing for the establishments, and to a certain extent, for the qualifications, essential to each. This division of labour should continue to be maintained, and should be carefully defined; but for practical efficiency, it must be combined with unity of direction and control.<sup>11</sup>

The specific function of the Control Department, as spelled out by the Strathnairn Committee, was the "direction and control of all supply services in the field and in garrison, with direct responsibility" to the Secretary for War, and

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of the manufacturing departments was also transferred to the Control Department. (Testimony of Colonel John M. Adye, Commanding Officer, Depot Brigade, Woolwich, 1870 Report on the Army Departments, pp. 445 and 449).

<sup>10</sup>1867 Report on Supply, p. 355.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 381.



through local (Control) officers, to the General Officer Commanding "for the completeness and efficiency of such services."<sup>12</sup>

The head of the Control Department, the Chief Controller, had, under the authority of the Secretary for War, the entire direction and control of the department.<sup>13</sup> Control officers were attached to large garrisons overseas and to camps and military districts in Great Britain and Ireland. In the field, these officers were subordinate solely to the General Officer Commanding and were held accountable for supply at each particular location. They also acted as advisers to the General Officer Commanding on all administrative questions relating to supply and finance.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, in case of war, Control officers would accompany the troops into the field.<sup>15</sup>

The basic principle of this change was to concentrate responsibility under a single officer for all supply functions.<sup>16</sup> This would then allow the Secretary for War and the General Officer Commanding the army in the field to communicate with

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 355.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid. The Controller in Chief (Major General Sir Henry Storks) was also appointed a Military Under Secretary of State (Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, p. 13).

<sup>14</sup>Testimony of Commissary-General William T. Power, a member of the Strathnairn Committee, 1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 416.

<sup>15</sup>1867 Report on Supply, p. 360.

<sup>16</sup>Testimony of Power, 1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 416.

only one person relating to supply instead of with several officers as before, resulting in more unity of action and better efficiency in war.<sup>17</sup>

The change also served the interest of economy because, with the new organization, the position of department head of each department affected by the change would be abolished.<sup>18</sup> The Government also hoped that the new system would reduce the enormous amount of correspondence at the War Office and the resultant delays in the accomplishment of business.<sup>19</sup>

The Government's hope was realized, in part, by 1869 as there was a definite improvement and simplification in the conduct of supply business even though the Control Department had existed for only about a year and had not been universally established throughout the Army. Before the establishment of the Control Department, all stores requisitions went through the Horse Guards, which checked and approved them, before they were sent to the appropriate department (Stores, Barrack, etc.) at the War Office for action. With the establishment of the Control Department, however, troops in the field made direct requisitions upon the Control Department, thus eliminating this correspondence. The local Control officer then used his own judgment on individual requisitions and their propriety

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<sup>17</sup>1867 Report on Supply, p. 355.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Testimony of Major General Storks, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 588.

in accordance with regulation and, if he approved them, he authorized the local store officer to issue the stores. He then sent a copy of the requisition to the War Office for review. The result was that, in the words of William T. Power, correspondence was "reduced to a minimum, communications [were] made as direct as possible" and only the officers responsible for supply transactions were involved.<sup>20</sup> This was an immense improvement over the former system which had caused delay and had brought no real advantage to anyone.<sup>21</sup>

Nonetheless, the Horse Guards were not particularly happy with the new arrangement. The military saw it as yet another assault upon its authority and influence and made this clear to the Parliamentary Committee inquiring into the conduct of business in the War Office. The Duke of Cambridge himself told the Committee that he thought the Control Department infringed "very much more upon the military branches than is desirable" in that the Horse Guards were now kept out of the channel of supply requisition. The result was that the Commander in Chief was kept in ignorance of many subjects of which he ought to be aware, and which had come to his attention before the change. The Duke asserted that the former system of requisitioning supplies through the Horse Guards

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<sup>20</sup> 1870 Report on the Army Departments, pp. 415 and 425 (testimony of Major General George Balfour, Assistant to the Controller in Chief).

<sup>21</sup> See the testimony of Power, 1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 416.



constituted a check on the War Office (especially the Stores' Department) in that any delays or irregularities came to the immediate attention of the Horse Guards, who then made inquiries to the War Office to correct them. The advent of the Control system eliminated this check.<sup>22</sup>

The changes of this decade were by no means limited to logistical matters. One change of note which occurred early in this period was the appointment in July, 1861, of a Director General of Ordnance who relieved the President of the Ordnance Select Committee of his duties as adviser to the Secretary for War on artillery and armaments, and who also took general charge of the manufacturing departments.<sup>23</sup>

The Director General of Ordnance was not situated at Woolwich, though, and was responsible only for the expenditure of the manufacturing departments.<sup>24</sup> As such, he served principally as a middleman or buffer between the War Office (more especially the Stores Department) and the manufacturing

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<sup>22</sup>1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 464. The Control Department was incorporated into the larger Supply Department by the reorganization of 1870 (see Chapter V, below). Thus, it is virtually impossible to accurately assess the actual impact to the supply system, if any, of the loss of the Horse Guards' check on requisitions because of the short duration of the Control system.

<sup>23</sup>Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, p. 12.

<sup>24</sup>Testimony of Major General J. St. George, the Director General of Ordnance, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 494.

departments.<sup>25</sup>

There were three basic reasons why the Director General of Ordnance did not reside at Woolwich and did not have more responsibility relating to the manufacturing departments. First, the Treasury objected to such a move. The Treasury was of course concerned with the expense of an additional position at Woolwich and balked at an expansion of the superintending staff there.<sup>26</sup> Second, the manufacturing department heads strenuously opposed the move. These factors, along with the third, a tradition of solid performance and efficiency under the existing system, led the Government to make no attempt to alter further the situation at Woolwich.<sup>27</sup>

The Director General of Ordnance himself, Major General St. George, recognized the inadequacy of this arrangement and correctly noted that the Woolwich Arsenal still acted independently with no direct, overall supervisor.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the Director of Stores and the Director General of Ordnance were quite independent of each other except in respect to the financial business of the manufacturing departments. Moreover, while the manufacturing departments were nominally under the Director General of Ordnance's direction relating to manufactures, the Stores Department at Woolwich took orders

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 492. See also the testimony of Rear Admiral J.C. Caffin, the Director of Stores, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 401.

<sup>26</sup> Testimony of St. George, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 492.

<sup>27</sup> 1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 358.

<sup>28</sup> 1867 Report on Supply, p. 493.

from the Director of Stores. The end result was that there was much confusion and delay over procedures.<sup>29</sup>

Another major, non-logistical change involved the Accountant General's Department. In 1864, the Secretary for War appointed a committee to inquire into the establishment of the War Office. After completing its work, the committee reported, among other things, that the Accountant General's Department was too large to be efficiently supervised by one person. Furthermore, the committee found that, owing to this lack of effective supervision, the work of examination of accounts stood very much in arrears. It therefore recommended that the existing department be separated into two distinct departments, each controlled by an officer responsible to the Secretary for War. It suggested that one branch handle preparation of the Estimates, the direction of payments and the final record of accounts and the other the examination and audit of accounts. The committee believed that such a separation would allow for a simplification of business which would in turn result in a reduction in the number of clerks and in more effective supervision.<sup>30</sup>

The Secretary for War followed the committee's recommendation exactly and, in 1865, divided the Accountant General's

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<sup>29</sup>Testimony of Caffin, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 401. See also the testimony of St. George, 1867 Report on Supply, pp. 492 and 494.

<sup>30</sup>1864 War Office, pp. 331-32 and testimony of Douglas Galton, the Assistant Under Secretary of State, 1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 392.



Department into the Accounts and Audit Departments.<sup>31</sup>

Unfortunately, the separation of functions did not simplify business as much as its planners had hoped. In December, 1869, John Maclean, first clerk, first section, Audit Department, stated that the separation was "upon the whole . . . not good" as it increased work considerably. Instead of a reduction in the number of clerks, the division required the employment of additional personnel. Earlier, accounts and audits had been performed by the same people who had had all the necessary information "at their fingers' ends." However, after the separation, continued references between the two departments were necessary, thus requiring additional labor, delay and expense.<sup>32</sup>

Notwithstanding the deficiencies in the conduct of business of the two departments, it seems apparent that improved efficiency resulted because of increased supervision within each department over the separate functions of account and audit. Along this line, Douglas Galton, the Assistant Under Secretary of State, stated in May, 1869, that "The accounts have never been in so forward a state as they

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<sup>31</sup>1870 Report on the Army Departments, pp. 353 and 371.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 460-61. William Henry White, a first class clerk in the Account Department, echoed Maclean's opinion. (1870 Report on the Army Departments, pp. 458-59). The Accountant General, William Brown, also commented unfavorably about the increased expense and the failure of the separation to simplify the conduct of business. (1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 386).

now are."<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, both Galton and John Milton, the Assistant Accountant General, thought the state of the audit of accounts more satisfactory than it had been before in that all arrears had been erased.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, the Accounts and Audit Departments presented a paradox: the division of the Accountant General's functions into two separate departments had wrought increased expense and new hardships upon the clerks, but it had also resulted in increased efficiency of output. The problem therefore remained to reconcile, if possible, the increased efficiency with improved working arrangements within and between the departments.

In addition to the major changes in War Office organization, several aspects of War Office operations during the decade were significant in that they represented major problem areas which had evolved shortly after the reorganization of 1855 and remained unresolved in 1868. The first of these was the problem of massive amounts of correspondence which continued to plague the War Office. In 1869, there was a slight drop from 1859 figures in the daily average number of letters received at the War Office but it was insignificant in terms of work saved. Delays and unnecessary minuting continued

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<sup>33</sup>1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 391.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 392-93.

unabated.<sup>35</sup>

The physical structure of the War Office in Pall Mall itself caused much of the delay in the accomplishment of business. As the business of the War Office had expanded after its move to Pall Mall in 1858, neighboring houses had been incorporated into the existing structure until the War Office became, in the words of historian W.S. Hamer, "a veritable rabbit-warren of rooms and corridors." Eventually, nineteen houses came to be occupied by War Office officials and clerks who labored in approximately 300 separate rooms. This arrangement necessitated the employment of 150 messengers solely for the purpose of inter-departmental communication.<sup>36</sup>

Another significant aspect was the situation of the Royal Engineers which remained the same (serving two masters) despite an attempt in 1862 to remedy it. This attempt involved the elimination of the position of Inspector General of Fortifications and, in its place, the appointment of an Inspector General of Engineers and Director of Works.<sup>37</sup>

In his function of Director of Works, the Inspector General came under the direct control of the Secretary for War.

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<sup>35</sup>Testimony of Ralph Thompson, who was in charge of the Registry of correspondence at the War Office, 1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 462. See also the testimony of Storks, a former Secretary for Military Correspondence, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 588.

<sup>36</sup>Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, p. 8.

<sup>37</sup>Testimony of Colonel W.F.D. Jervois, a member of the Royal Engineers since 1839, 1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 430.



The Director of Works was the head of the new Works Department which became responsible for the construction of fortifications and barracks, including their planning.<sup>38</sup> In addition, certain other duties of the former Inspector General of Fortifications went to a Royal Engineer officer who became the Superintendent of the Barrack Department. This new department was responsible for barrack services (water, gas, etc.) and for barrack furniture and bedding.<sup>39</sup>

In his function of Inspector General of Engineers, the Inspector General was a consultant on the employment of engineer officers. The Deputy Adjutant General, Royal Engineers, remained responsible for this function, however, and merely forwarded his recommendations through the Inspector General of Engineers to the Commander in Chief and the Secretary for War. This change did avoid some of the past complications but it did not place responsibility for the distribution of engineer officers under the same individual responsible for the execution of works.<sup>40</sup> The result was that, as Major General Sir Lintorn Simmons, Royal Engineers, stated in December, 1869, "there is considerable probability of the

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<sup>38</sup>Return showing the Distribution of the Duties of all Offices now consolidated under the Secretary for War (1867, Vol. XLI, p. 825), p. 830. Hereinafter referred to as 1867 Distribution of Duties. Also, testimony of Major Arthur Leahy, Royal Engineers, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 529 and Biddulph, Lord Cardwell, p. 12.

<sup>39</sup>1867 Distribution of Duties, p. 830.

<sup>40</sup>1870 Report on the Army Departments, pp. 430 (Jervois) and 437 (statement by Lord Northbrook, Chairman of the Committee).

corps not being utilized to the greatest advantage."<sup>41</sup>

The final aspect was the situation of the Commissariat. It remained in a state of confusion without much noticeable improvement in efficiency.

Many people felt a very real concern in this decade over the fact that the Commissariat was critically short of officer personnel, despite its new military character. According to Commissary-General William H. Drake, the Commissariat had no reserve forces except those personnel stationed in England. Thus, if England became involved in a major war, the system at home would have to be broken up in order to provide a supply of officers for field duty overseas.<sup>42</sup> In fact, during the fighting in New Zealand, the Commissariat had had to borrow officers from the line and use civilians "of every possible class" to fill its ranks.<sup>43</sup>

The reason for the shortage in personnel was the traditional one--economics. As far back as January, 1857, the Duke of Cambridge had tried to impress upon the Government the need to train more men for the Commissariat, but, despite the lessons of the Crimean War, Lord Panmure had turned him

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<sup>41</sup>1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 437. This opinion was echoed by Colonel Murray, the Deputy Director of Works for Barracks, who felt, like Simmons, that the state of the administrative apparatus of the Royal Engineers was unsatisfactory because of the lack of a single head. (1870 Report on the Army Departments, p. 440).

<sup>42</sup>1867 Report on Supply, p. 506.

<sup>43</sup>Testimony of Drake, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 508.

down in the interests of economy. "'The supplies of the Army will have to be obtained in the most economical manner,'" Panmure told the Duke, "'in order to keep John Bull in a good humour.'" <sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, the definition of the Commissariat's duties seemed to become more complex and confused as time went on. Besides the issue of the use of Commissariat officers for financial functions overseas, the Commissariat was also faced with the fact that its officers at home did not receive or issue fuel, light and straw like their counterparts abroad, they only contracted for them. They also had nothing to do with finances as this was a function of the War Office through the Accountant General. <sup>45</sup> Deputy Commissary-General E.B. Fonblanque aptly summed up this situation when he stated to the Strathnairn Committee that "The great mischief of our service is that we have one system for home service and another for foreign service; and when we take the field both systems are immediately abandoned, and a new one is improvised for the occasion." <sup>46</sup>

In conclusion, the overall confusion and piecemeal

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<sup>44</sup> St. Aubyn, Royal George, p. 120.

<sup>45</sup> Testimony of William T. Power, the Commissary-General in 1864, 1867 Report on Supply, Appendix VI, p. 626. See also the testimony of Drake, 1867 Report on Supply, p. 506.

<sup>46</sup> 1867 Report on Supply, p. 541.



reform system of the immediate post-Crimean War and post-re-organization years continued for another decade. Several major organizational changes were made, the most important being the establishment of the Control Department, which reflected a general concern by War Office administrators and by Parliament over the quality of supervision both over and within the various departments. The situation of the Accountant General's Department was an example of the concern for more supervision within a department while the creation of the Control Department reflected a desire for increased supervision over several departments. The creation of the Control Department also reflected a move toward more administrative unity within the War Office itself, so as to forestall potential problems in case of war and provide for a simplification of business. It also represented another intrusion by the civil element into Horse Guards' affairs. The most important aspect of the new department, though, was that it further enhanced the trend toward increased War Office unity begun by Lord Panmure in 1855.

## C H A P T E R    V

### FINAL WORDS

The period 1855-68 was one of turbulence, confusion and uncertainty in Army administration. It reflected quite clearly the prevailing attitude of the time--from public indignation over the condition of the Army and concern over its initial lack of success in the Crimea, to a return of public complacency about the military situation. Lacking an overall, co-ordinated plan, the Government and War Office administrators tried to effect needed improvements in efficiency and organization and, to a great extent, they succeeded. Panmure and his successors altered and refined his original measures throughout the period in a search for the proper combination. Without a doubt, the final product was a distinct improvement over the pre-Crimean War situation. However, it was by no means perfect and still posed several problems to War Office authorities.

In December, 1868, Edward Cardwell succeeded Sir John Pakington as Secretary of State for War and served in that position until 1874. During this time, Cardwell undertook a major reorganization of the War Office and abolished purchase and long service. For the latter two actions, he won enduring notoriety because, in the words of J.W. Fortescue, "therewith the knell of the old British Army was

rung."<sup>1</sup> Other historians have gone further and considered Cardwell the progenitor of War Office reform.<sup>2</sup> This assumption is totally in error. Although Cardwell provided the strong administrative hand necessary to effect needed reform within the Army, he certainly did not provide the original impetus for reform of the War Office. His War Office Act of 1870 simply continued the process begun by Lord Panmure in 1855--that of unifying Army administration in the War Office. By reorganizing it into three main branches--Supply Department (basically the Control Department), Military Department and Finance Department--and by moving the Commander in Chief to Pall Mall, Cardwell merely carried War Office unity one step further than his predecessors.

Cardwell's reorganization of 1870 was followed by major reorganizations in 1887-88, 1895 and 1904. The major theme of each, beginning with that of 1855, was the integration of civilian power with professional military knowledge. Each successive reorganization attempted to improve upon its predecessor and create a system whereby the civilians who were steadily gaining power and authority over the Army would receive the necessary knowledge to administer it

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<sup>1</sup>Fortescue, British Army, XIII, p. 560.

<sup>2</sup>John Gooch, for example, stated that "The advent of Edward Cardwell as Secretary of State for War in 1868 heralded a period of some thirty-four years of attempts at reforming the War Office." (Gooch, Plans of War, pp. 3-4).



effectively.<sup>3</sup>

The reorganization of 1887-88 divided the War Office into two divisions--Military and Civil--with all the principal departments except finance and manufacture united under the Commander in Chief. Thus, for the first time since the eighteenth century, supply and operations were completely the responsibility of the military. A great burden was therefore placed on the Commander in Chief, and the Secretary for War was left with only two official advisers. This reorganization also furthered dualism in control in that it clearly divided responsibility between the military and civil elements.<sup>4</sup>

The reorganization of 1895 came on the heels of the resignation of the Duke of Cambridge. With him out of the way, the Government diminished the authority and responsibility of the Commander in Chief. Five great military officers, instead of one, were now established within the War Office: the Commander in Chief (who acted as chief adviser to the Secretary for War and had general command of all forces), the Adjutant General (who directed recruiting, discipline and training), the Inspector General of Fortifications (who was responsible for barracks, fortifications and lands), the Quartermaster General (who administered food, forage, quartering and lands) and the Director General of Ordnance (who had charge of military stores).

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<sup>3</sup>Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, p. xi.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 129-30 and Gordon, The War Office, pp. 67-68.

The Commander in Chief had general supervision over the other four but each was directly responsible to the Secretary for War. The Commander in Chief thus lacked real control. Furthermore, the clear division of responsibility between the military and the civilian authorities established by the reorganization of 1887-88 became blurred.<sup>5</sup>

While the reorganization of 1855 first attempted to integrate civilian power with military knowledge, the reorganization of 1904 ultimately realized this goal, the eventual result of the multiple reorganizations of the War Office. In 1904, the Army Council was established under the Secretary for War and the General Staff concept was introduced into the British Army.

The Army Council had as its mission the determination of all questions of military policy. It consisted of three civilian members (the Secretary for War [who was the Council's president], the Parliamentary Under Secretary and the Financial Secretary) and four military members (the Adjutant General [personnel], the Quartermaster General [supply], the Master General of Ordnance [ordnance] and, after 1909, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff). The Council concept ensured that the Secretary for War would be provided with the best professional military opinion. It also divided policy making from administration in that each member of the Council was now

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<sup>5</sup>Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, p. 167 and Gordon, The War Office, pp. 70-71. There was no change in the office of Financial Secretary.

assisted by a Director who was responsible for the administrative duties of his department.<sup>6</sup>

In addition, the reorganization of 1904 eliminated the position of Commander in Chief as an anachronism which had outlived its usefulness and which had become too burdensome for one man to handle effectively. Command of troops went to generals located outside the War Office; thus, the command function was removed from that of policy making. No professional head of the Army was left who could now compete with the Secretary for War for control of the Army.<sup>7</sup>

The reorganization of 1904 established complete unity and effectively absorbed the military elements into War Office administration. The Secretary for War now possessed complete authority.<sup>8</sup> Thus did Lord Panmure's pioneer attempts at unification reach their fruition forty-nine years later.

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<sup>6</sup>Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, p. 235 and Gordon, The War Office, pp. 79-80.

<sup>7</sup>Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, p. 235 and Gordon, The War Office, pp. 80-82.

<sup>8</sup>Hamer, Civil-Military Relations, p. 235 and Gordon, The War Office, pp. 81-82.



# ARMY ADMINISTRATION BEFORE THE REORGANIZATION OF 1855

## SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR AND THE COLONIES

1. size of the force to be maintained
2. allocation of garrisons to Colonial possessions
3. conveyance of orders to commanders abroad
4. in wartime--selection of officers to command in chief and control of operations bearing on the conduct of the war

## HOME DEPARTMENT

1. Militia
2. distribution of troops at home
3. general military questions relating to Great Britain

## SECRETARY AT WAR

1. finance of the Army
2. contact of the Army with the civil population

## COMMANDER IN CHIEF

1. discipline and efficiency of the Infantry and the Cavalry
2. enlistment of soldiers
3. commissioning and promotion of officers
4. recommendations for command
5. commander of forces at home

## ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT

1. Artillery and Engineers
2. arms and stores
3. barracks and fortifications
4. provisions at home

## TREASURY

1. general control over finance of the Army
2. management of the Commissariat Department which supplied provisions, fuel and light, transports and money to troops abroad

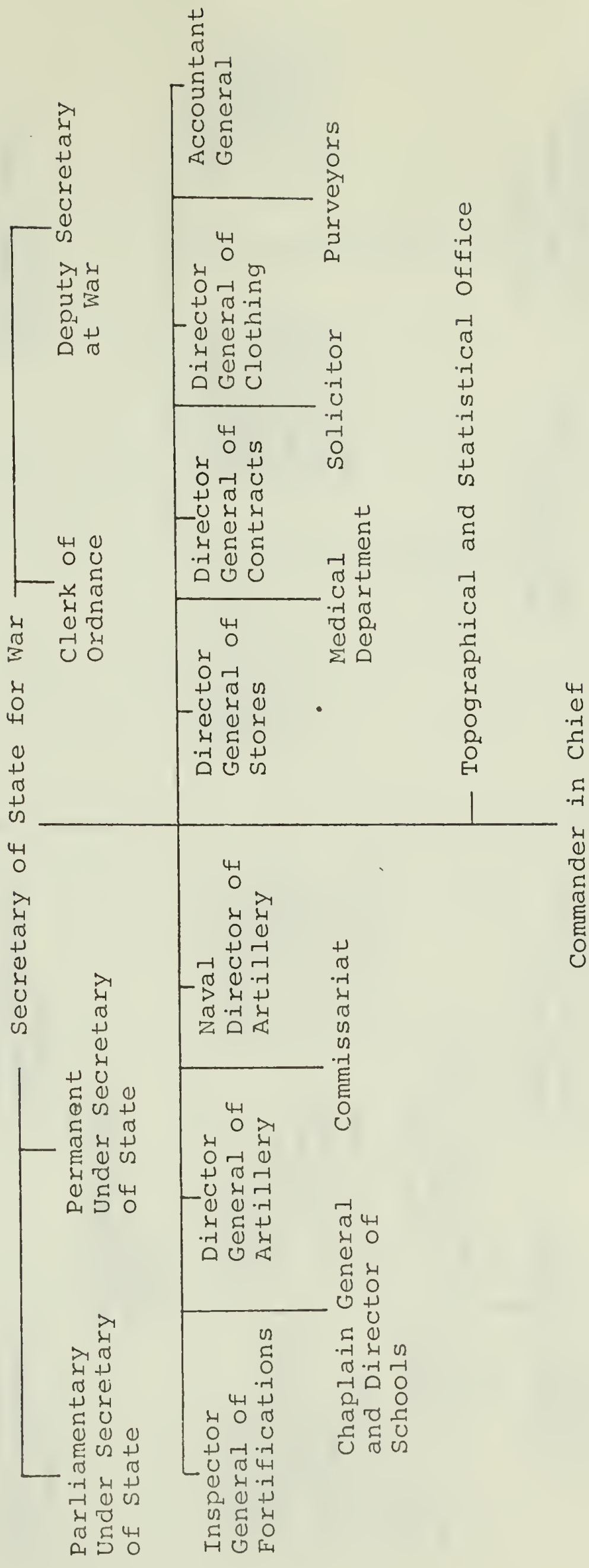
## BOARD OF GENERAL OFFICERS

inspection of Infantry and Cavalry clothing

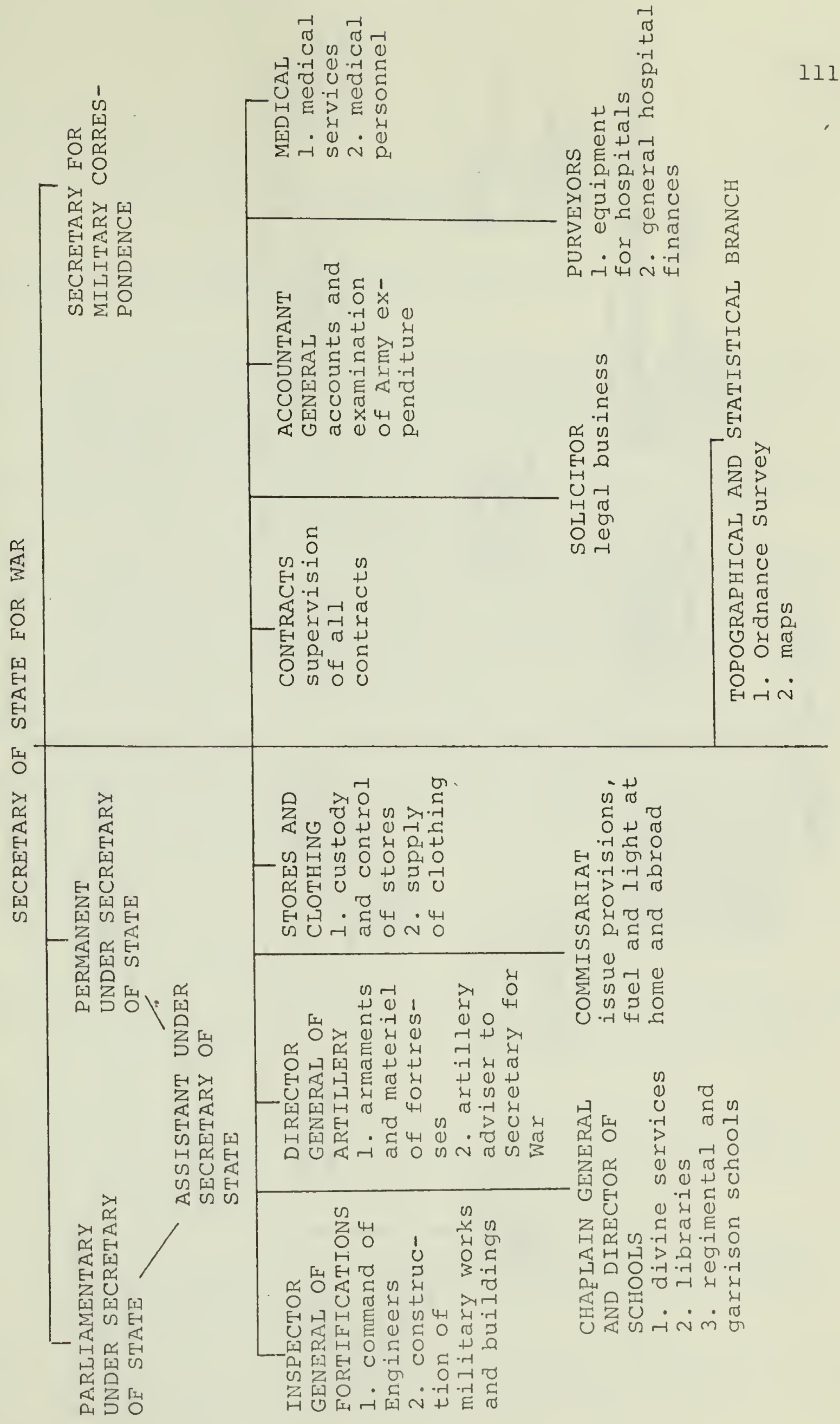
## MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

medical provisions

# ORGANIZATION OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT, 1856



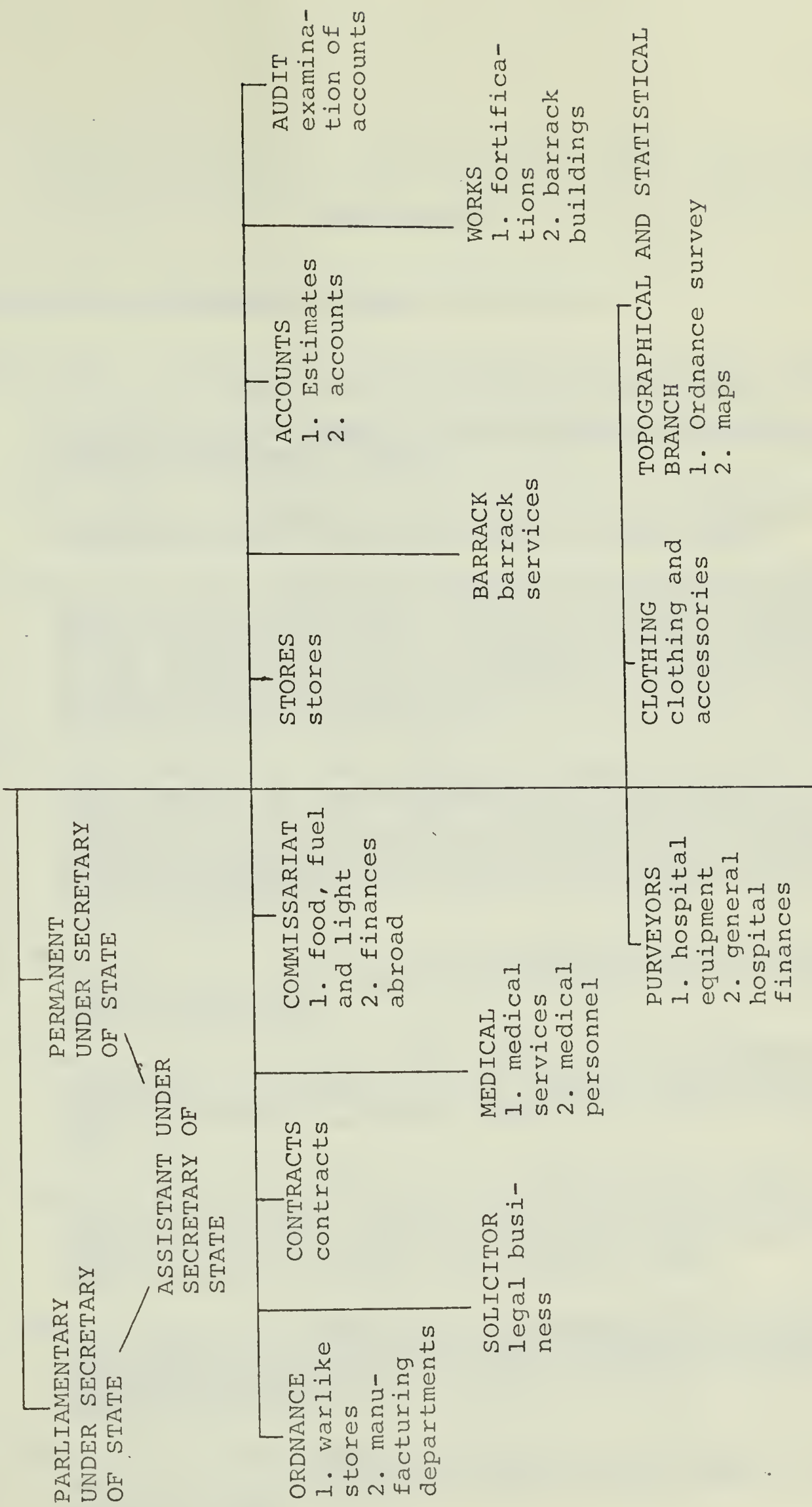
# ORGANIZATION OF THE WAR OFFICE, 1857, AND DUTIES OF MAJOR DEPARTMENTS





# ORGANIZATION OF THE WAR OFFICE, 1867, AND DUTIES OF MAJOR DEPARTMENTS

## SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR



COMMANDER IN CHIEF

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